लाल बहादुर शास्त्री प्रशासन अकादमी
Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy of Administration
मसूरी
MUSSOORIE

पुस्तकालय
LIBRARY

अवाप्ति संख्या
Accession No. 100087
वर्ग संख्या
Class No. 070.92
पुस्तक संख्या
Book No. Sub

GL 070.92
SUB
100087
LBSNAA

REVIVED MEMORIES

REVIVED MEMORIES

BY

K. SUBBA RAO, B.A.

(Formerly Sub-Editor of the *Hindu* and Joint Editor of the *Indian Social Reformer* ; Retired Asst. Commissioner Mysore Service, and Political Member, Dewas (J) Central India).

PUBLISHERS :

GANESH & CO., MADRAS.

PRINTED AT
THE MADRAS LAW JOURNAL PRESS
MYLAPORE, MADRAS
1933

All Rights Reserved.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

FOREWORD BY THE RT. HON. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI.

CHAPTER.		PAGES.
I.	INTRODUCTORY ..	1-4
II.	EARLY LIFE ..	5-16
	Parentage ..	5-7
	Life at Vallam ..	7-10
	The Town High School, Kumbakonam ..	11-16
III.	AT THE "CAMBRIDGE OF SOUTH INDIA."	17-22
	Freedom from racial bias ..	19-21
	Interest in journalism ..	21 & 22
IV.	MR. TANDALAM GOPALA RAO ..	23-42
	A great teacher of English ..	24 & 25
	His last days ..	25-27
	His Memorial to Government ..	27-42
V.	TERMINATION OF THE COLLEGE COURSE ..	43-49
	University Examinations ..	43 & 44
	Famous Families ..	45-48
	My ambitions ..	48 & 49
VI.	THE COIMBATORE NATIVE HIGH SCHOOL ..	50-80
	The Staff ..	50-53
	The Inspector of Schools ..	53-56
	The Collector ..	56 & 57
	Mr. H. B. Grigg ..	58 & 59
	An exciting incident ..	59 & 60

Chapter.		Pages.
	The Director of Public Instruction	60 & 61
	Mr. A. Monro ..	61 & 62
	The District Judge ..	62-68
	A valuable acquaintance ..	68-70
	Correspondent of the "*Hindu*" ..	70-72
	The Erode Native High School ..	72
	The Karamadai Village School ..	72 & 73
	Aided Schools and their precarious condition ..	73
	Captain A. T. Rolland ..	73 & 74
	My first visit to Bangalore ..	74-76
	Justice A. Ramachandra Iyer ..	76-78
	Deputy Inspector of Schools ..	78 & 79
	The offer of a Taluq Gumastaship.	79 & 80
VII.	Move to Madras ..	81-88
	Interview with G. Subramanya Iyer.	82-87
	Sir T. Muthuswamy Iyer's advice.	87 & 88
	Mr. R. V. Srinivasa Iyer's approbation ..	88
VIII.	At Madura ..	89-98
	My Daily Routine ..	91-95
	The Price of Greatness ..	95-97
	The Cessation of the Enquiry ..	97 & 98
IX.	At Madras ..	99-129
	An accidental meeting ..	100-102
	Mr. A. O. Hume and the Congress.	102 & 103
	The First Calcutta Congress ..	103
	The Park Fire ..	103 & 104
	How the Conflagration Arose ..	104-106
	Story of my escape ..	106-109
	Mr. P. Rangiah Naidu ..	109-112
	Rai Bahadur P. Anandacharlu ..	112 & 113
	The Madras Congress ..	113-115
	Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao ..	115 & 116
	The B. A. Degree ..	116

CHAPTER.		PAGES.
	Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar	117-119
	Congress of 1894	120 & 121
	The High Court and the Executive Council	121-123
	The Madras Mahajana Sabha	123-126
	A startling Disclosure	126-129
X.	THE COURTALLAM SCANDAL	130-133
XI.	THE ADAMANTINE WALL	134-139
XII.	THE SECOND CALCUTTA CONGRESS	140-148
	A bogus personality	141-143
	The Turkish Bath	143 & 144
	The Nagpur Jungles	144-148
XIII.	MR. G. SUBRAMANIA IYER	149-179
	Mr. Saligram Subba Rao	152
	Two periods of G. Subramanya Iyer's life	153
	National self-respect	153 & 154
	His sense of impartiality	154-159
	Pessimistic optimism	159-162
	To-day and To-morrow	162 & 163
	Living in the past	163-165
	Indian States	165 & 166
	An All-India reputation	166-169
	Sense of fairness	169-171
	Dead man alive	171-175
	Editorial responsibility	176-179
XIV.	MR. M. VEERARAGHAVACHARIAR	180-183
XV.	THE SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENT	184-201
	Reflection and Leading	190-192
	Physician heal thyself	192-199
	Marriage at Bombay	199
	The after effects	200 & 201

CHAPTER.		PAGES.
XVI.	THE REMARRIAGE MOVEMENT ..	202-212
	Precept and practice ..	203-205
	A real romance ..	205-212
XVII.	ATTITUDE OF THE *"Hindu"* IN REGARD TO SOCIAL REFORM ..	213-216
XVIII.	"THE INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER"..	217-219
	Mr. K. Natarajan ..	218 & 219
XIX.	SOCIAL REFORM ACTIVITIES ..	220-221
	Enlightenment of women ..	220-221
XX.	RAO BAHADUR M. RANGACHARIAR, M.A. ..	222-224
XXI.	THE AGE OF CONSENT ACT ..	225-227
XXII.	THE ANTI-NAUTCH MOVEMENT ..	228-233
XXIII.	JUSTICE M. G. RANADE ..	234-258
	My acquaintance with him ..	236-238
	Mr. Ranade's Letters ..	238-255
	His interest in Indian States ..	255-257
	A giant worker ..	257-258
XXIV.	SIR N. G. CHANDAVARKAR ..	259-266
XXV.	MR. B. M. MALABARI ..	267 & 268
XXVI.	MR. BABU SASIPADA BANERJI ..	269-274
XXVII.	ATTEMPTS AT CHANGE OF PROFESSION ..	275-295
	Mr. Monro and his letters ..	276-278
	Mysore Affairs ..	281-290
	H. H. the Maharaja Gaikwar ..	290 & 291
	Lord Wenlock ..	291 & 292
	Entry into the Mysore Service ..	293-295
	Offer from Baroda ..	295

CHAPTER.		PAGES.
XXVIII.	SRINIVASA RAGHAVA IYENGAR, C.I.E.	296-339
	His refined culture	296-298
	His cosmopolitan sympathy	298
	His early struggles	298-300
	His kindness	300 & 301
	Mr. Chenstal Row's hilarity	301-305
	At Bombay	305-307
	At Baroda	307 & 308
	Mr. Sethu Rao Peishwa	308 & 309
	A formal protest	309 & 310
	Marvellous generosity	311-313
	Balanced judgment	313-317
	Prompt aid	317-320
	First Impressions	320-322
	The Ganapathi Mela	322 & 323
	Rumoured resignation of the Dewan	323-326
	Abrupt termination	326-328
	The advantage	328 & 329
	Mr. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar's Letters	329-339
XXIX.	SIR K. SESHADRI IYER	340-376
	The secret of his long tenure	341-355
	The Mysore Civil Service	355-359
	Sympathy towards the poor	359 & 360
	Belief in Astrology	360 & 361
	Importance of Bath	362 & 363
	Sustained Opposition	363-365
	Masterly grasp of facts	365-367
	A generous Heart	367 & 368
	A good friend	369-371
	Autocracy and Democracy	371-373
	Good and Evil	374 & 376
XXX.	RAI BAHADUR AMBIL NARASIMHA IYENGAR	377-392
	Early Life	377 & 378

CHAPTER.		PAGES.
	Unpopularity	378
	The Eye-opener	378-380
	Devotion to royal family	380-383
	Interesting anecdotes	383
	His interest in female education	384-386
	A Bengalee friend	386-388
	Letter from an English officer	388 & 389
	His Social qualities	390
	Impartial judgment	390 & 391
	Concluding Remarks	392
XXXI.	SIR P. N. KRISHNAMURTHY	393-400
	The Party System	395 & 396
	Durbars	397
	Personal Merits	397
	His Environments	398
	Mr. M. Venkatakrishnaiah	399 & 400
XXXII.	Mr. V. P. MADHAVA RAO	401-411
	Primary impelling forces	401 & 402
	Permanent Memorials	402 & 403
	First Official Crisis	403-405
	Strange administrative devices	406-408
	A third crisis	408 & 410
	Conclusion	410 & 411
XXXIII.	PRADHANA SHIROMANI T. ANANDA RAO	412-420
	First welcome to me	414
	Stubborn persistence in his own methods	414-417
	Unruffled temper and unequalled forbearance	417-419
	Conclusion	420
XXXIV.	RAO BAHADUR A. RANGASWAMY IYENGAR	421-427

Chapter.		Pages.
	His attitude towards Kannambadi Dam	425 & 426
	Life a mixture of opposites	427
XXXV.	Sir M. Viswesvaraya	428-438
	My first acquaintance	429 & 30
	His chief attributes as Dewan	430 & 31
	Tangible monuments	431 & 432
	The invisible monument	432-434
	A personification of diligence and discipline	434 438
XXXVI.	Sir K. P. Puttanna Chettiar	439-442
XXXVII.	Mr. C. Madiah	443-449
	Mr. Dalavoy Devraj Urs	445-448
	Mr. K. Doraswami Iyer	448 & 449
XXXVIII.	Sardar Sir M. Kantaraj Urs	450-454
XXXIX.	Sir Vithaldas Damodar Thackersey	455-458
XL.	My British Acquaintances	459-504
	Revs. Kay and Blake	461-465
	Dr. Miller	466-468
	Mr. H. O. D. Harding	468-476
	Dr. D. Duncan	477
	Mr. Eardley Norton	477-479
	Sedition—The strangest View	479-482
	Mr. R. B. Plummer	482-484
	Sir E. Maconochie	484-488
	Lord Ampthill	488 & 489
	Mr. J. B. Pennington	489-493
	Sir S. M. Fraser	493
	Sir A. T. Arundell	493 & 494
	Sir James Thompson	495
	Sir W. Meyer	495-498

Chapter.		Pages.
	Mr. H. Beauchamp, C. I. E.	.. 498-503
	Lord Wenlock	.. 503 & 504
XLI.	The Mysore Jubilee	.. 505-518
	Its unique character	.. 505-507
	Its political significance of the Jubilee	..507 & 508
	Capacity to get work done	..508 & 509
	Glorious achievements	..509 & 510
	The Constitutional aspect	.. 510-512
	The Finance	..512 & 513
	The Maharaja's devotion to duty	..513 & 514
	Some remarkable traits	.. 514-518

FOREWORD.

Mr. Subba Rao's book, which I heartily commend to the public, is a good specimen of its class. In easy fluent style, drawing no attention to itself and well fitted for narrative composition, it recalls events of the last two generations, some remembered vividly, some just fading out of the memory, but none wholly forgotten. A happy instinct has led the author to make his chronicle revolve round persons rather than episodes. The stage is capacious and holds distinguished company, but the interest is never uncomfortably poignant and one never gets unduly excited. Mr. Subba Rao is not concerned to applaud, condemn or defend, he nowhere seeks to stir the reader's emotions. Yet his experience as teacher, journalist, official and private secretary to a Dewan might have enabled him, if he were a malicious gossip or grievance-monger, to make ugly disclosures, destroy reputations, and stir up family feuds. Reminiscence can be a dangerous occupation, and I beg leave to congratulate the writer on the way he has resisted temptations and avoided pitfalls. He evidently has two of the gifts necessary for writing about oneself, the power of selecting the essential, and the charity which forgets evil.

Mr. Subba Rao has a quiet genial humour which pleases without startling, as where he describes his

failure to realise his ambition to make a world-tour. This, he says, "I have, by force of circumstances, been compelled to postpone to the next birth". It is a keen eye for witty and dramatic situations which records two incidents in the life of that most remarkable and attractive personage, Rajah Sir T. Madhava Rao. An Anglo-Indian paper wrote of him: "The mantle of eloquence has fallen on the shoulders of Rajah Sir T. Madhava Rao, and the Viceroy himself lags behind him in the race." The Viceroy then was the famous Lord Lytton. Many years later we find him presiding at a great demonstration against the Age of Consent Bill. In confuting his famous cousin Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao he used the polysyllabic invective "the antediluvian nebulosities of the Vedas". This phrase was the occasion of unprecedented rowdyism. The poor Rajah had to be carried out by friends and "that was his last exit from all public meetings". Many anecdotes of this kind enliven these pages and will reward the reader.

The pictures here given of the eminent men whom the author met in his life prove his insight into character, his wide sympathies, and his kindliness of disposition. The most vivid is that of Mr. G. Subrahmanya Aiyar, a somewhat rugged and pugnacious character, but full of earnestness, pluck and command. Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar receives full treatment and his varied abilities find in our writer a warm admirer and eager exponent. The great Mahadev Govind Ranade figures prominently in the book. Mr. Subba Rao is naturally

proud of his friendship and records his own account of three ambitions, two of which were not fulfilled and the third is involved in the mystic and mysterious future. At the end is an appreciation of the present Maharajah of Mysore, eloquent and enthusiastic, but not too eloquent and enthusiastic for that high-minded and virtuous Prince. I shall conclude by quoting a memorable remark of Mr. Chentsal Rao which our author describes as the difference between autocracy and democracy. He compares his method of doing things with that of Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar.

> "Our methods are different. He would carry out his schemes against all opposition and if necessary would at times even throw sand in the eyes of his opponents, whereas my method is always to carry the public with me, to argue with them, to convince them and to progress inch by inch. It is this difference in our methods, though our aim is the same, that accounts for his unpopularity and my popularity."

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri.

Madras,
9th May, 1933.

REVIVED MEMORIES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

In June 1921, three months after my retirement from the Mysore Service, Mr. K. Natarajan, the distinguished journalist, who is held in high esteem in the whole of India for his originality, rare independence of outlook, and matchless elegance of expression, who has been acquainted with me for over 36 years and with whom I worked for a time, suggested to me the advisability of publishing my reminiscences. It took me three years to make up my mind to give effect to the suggestion. At one time it seemed to me that such a prosaic and insignificant life as mine should be left in complete oblivion; at another time it occurred to me that for the generality of mankind the life of an ordinary individual would, if carefully and truthfully portrayed, have its own value and would not be altogether uninteresting. Therefore I at last ventured to court the hospitality of the valuable columns of the *Hindu* where, by virtue of having been a member of the staff at one time, I could expect indulgent treatment, for publishing a series of articles.

It was over a quarter of a century since I bade farewell with feelings of regret to the *sanctum sanctorum* of the "Hindu" Office after having served therein for ten years from April 1886. In this interval, great changes had occurred in the journalistic world. A new generation of Editors, more progressive in its outlook and more pronounced in its ambitions, and a new generation of readers with a more acute critical faculty had come into existence. It was not therefore without great diffidence that I applied to the Editor to be admitted again into the ranks of active workers. In this endeavour I felt I was on vantage ground, for though I had severed my connection with the paper, the successive Editors were my friends. The late Mr. S. Rangaswamy Iyengar and the Managing Proprietor of the paper are cousins, sons of Dewan Bahadur S. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar, B.A., C.I.E., and his brother S. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, B.A., B.L. I had served as Personal Assistant under the former when he was Dewan of Baroda and I was acquainted with the latter all his life. The first had served the British Government with such faith and with such fervour that he was regarded as one of the strongest pillars of the State. The second had, by his courageous conduct of the *Hindu* and by undertaking a perilous voyage to England in his old age, rising far above the social conventions of his family and community, established his name in imperishable annals. That the descendants of such an illustrious family, without travelling along the well-beaten and safe path of entering the Government

service or the legal profession, should have chosen the highly patriotic and the highly risky career of journalism, in their very teens, after undergoing a period of probation under Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, was to me a matter of great gratification in the public interests and in the interests of good government. They are men with a permanent stake in the country and their public spirit is beyond cavil.

The reply I received from the Editor of the *Hindu* to my first letter was characteristic of the spirit of the times. He asked me to send a copy of the manuscript, giving me a hint that the publication in the paper, of contributions of the kind I had in view, depended on merit and was not a mere concomitant of personal likes and dislikes. I appreciated the friendly observation. For I was aware that unless the reading public took kindly to a writer, even the Editor was helpless. The Editor is a good representative of the general reader, and if he was not satisfied, then there was no ground for the hope that his readers would be.

I was agreeably surprised when, within a week of my sending my first batch of manuscripts, I received the proof of the whole for revision, a sign of approval and acceptance. From that day, September 1924 till now, the *Hindu* has been exceedingly kind to me and has published in full my "Revived Memories" from time to time. I take this opportunity of expressing my sense of obligation to the conductors of the *Hindu* for the encouragement thus given to me. I frankly wish to acknowledge that but for their help these contribu-

tions would not have seen the light of day. Subsequently friends and acquaintances have told me in person and by letter that they liked the "Memories" and would be glad if I published these in a volume. This demand has come from so many quarters that I have at last resolved to comply with it. These briefly are the circumstances which have led to this publication. I have revised the articles as they appeared in the *Hindu*. The requirements of a daily paper are imminent. Therefore I had to use all possible efforts to keep up the interest of the readers and to begin my story rather abruptly and introduce details later on. Now I have revised the matter as far as possible chronologically. If the readers think that on the whole—barring inevitable and unconscious mistakes—I have produced a volume worthy of preservation and reference I shall feel amply rewarded.

CHAPTER II

EARLY LIFE

PARENTAGE

My father C. Krishna Rao lived to a good old age, and died in his 85th year in 1922. His early days were cast in the pre-mutiny period. My paternal grandfather died early in life, leaving behind him two sons and two daughters. My father was an infant at that time, and the family migrated from Coimbatore to Kumbakonam where a near relation was employed in an influential position. The name of Vyasa Rao, the celebrated Tahsildar, who has built temples and choultries at Tiruvadi, Tiruturaipundi, Pattukottah, and Kumbakonam and who has endowed a whole Agraharam in the last-named place, is still cherished by the members of his sect, if not generally by the entire Hindu community. A Tahsildar was in those days one of the high officers, and the prestige he commanded was something marvellous. The only daughter of Vyasa Rao was given in marriage to my father's elder brother. Both the brothers learnt English, Hindustani, Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit and Kannada characters at home and had not the benefit of attending any school. My father then sought employment and was entertained on the monthly salary of Rs. 3½ in 1854 as a Munshi.

He worked his way up and soon rose to the position of magisterial clerk in the Deputy Collector's Office, Tanjore. T. Muthusami Iyer, the eminent jurist (subsequently the Hon'ble Justice Sir) happened to be the presiding Deputy Magistrate at Tanjore and my father very soon created a favourable impression on him. In a very sensational criminal case, J. B. Norton (the distinguished friend of India and father of Eardley Norton, the talented Madras and Calcutta Barrister) was arguing before Muthusami Iyer, and a difference of opinion arose between the magistrate and the counsel regarding certain statements deposed by one of the witnesses for the prosecution. They agreed to refer to the notes taken by the clerk and to abide by the contents. What was the surprise of Norton when my father's notes contained the very words noted by himself! The Judge felt no disappointment and cheerfully yielded the point to the counsel. In a letter, dated 31st March 1884, Sir T. Muthusami Iyer, writing to a high-placed friend of his about my father, refers to this incident in the following words:—"He is not a graduate, but he is one of that class of public servants who have a thorough practical knowledge and who is, what is rare among uneducated men, perfectly upright and honourable. He was for a time under me when I was at Tanjore and I had a very high opinion of him. The late Mr. J. B. Norton who appeared before me to defend a prisoner in a heavy criminal case was struck with the rapidity and accuracy with which he recorded evidence elicited by counsel."

J. B. Norton lost his case but he carried with him a high opinion of Muthusami Iyer's judicial talents. My father used to tell me how Muthusami Iyer would go in the evenings to Norton and discuss with him points of Hindu Law of great general interest but of absolutely no bearing on any matter then engaging public attention. It was the general belief in Tanjore that Muthusami Iyer's transfer from Tanjore to Madras, from the executive to the judicial line, was not a little due to the kindly interest evinced by Norton and his personal intercession with the then Governor of Madras.

LIFE AT VALLAM.

It was at this time, in the early sixties of the last century, that I was born in Tanjore. My father then became the Sub-Magistrate of Vedaranyam and subsequently of Vallam. Vallam is a very important charge, being the headquarters of the Collector. Dewan Bahadur T. Venkaswami Rao, one of the brothers of Rao Bahadur T. Gopal Rao, was at that time the Collector's Sheristadar at Vallam. The most important officer next to the Collector was the Huzur Sheristadar. The splendour of the office was then at its highest, and no Deputy Collector, nor any civilian Assistant Collector or Sub-Collector wielded the influence which the Huzur Sheristadar in those days exercised. His pay also was relatively far higher than that of his namesake of the present day. The Haileybury men who held District charges used to rely implicitly on the advice of the Sheristadar. It was

the popular belief in official circles, whether well founded or not, that it was the declared policy of the Government and the Board of Revenue that the Collector should consult his Sheristadar in all important matters. When they agreed, it was smooth sailing. But when the Sheristadar strongly differed from the Collector, it was an uphill task for the latter to get sanction for his schemes. It was this co-ordination of work and responsibility which invested the chief ministerial officer of the Collector with a special halo of glory. He was the priest behind the Deity and received due homage. I believe at about this time another illustrious Indian who rose to the position of the Prime Minister of a premier Indian State and who was regarded as an authority on statistics and economics, S. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar (Dewan Bahadur and C.I.E. subsequently), was a clerk of the Collector's office.

I was spoilt a great deal by indulgence at home and I never attended regularly any school in my early boyhood. At Vallam one day one of my playmates Vamana Rao (who became subsequently a Tahsildar) invited me to go with him to the Mission School, holding out the hope of a prize from an English visitor. I followed him, and very soon a stalwart Englishman, not only spoke kindly to us in the class-room but lifted me up, placed me on a bench, gave me the English Primer and taught me the alphabet! When I returned home I learnt that this personage was no other than J. Marsh, the far-famed

educationist to whose exertions Tanjore owes a good deal. From that day it has been one of my superstitions to attribute to the inspiration which I received as a child, from Mr. Marsh, my admiration of and love for the English language and literature.

One day when I with several friends was flying a kite in a *maidan*, with the string in hand, with my eyes keen on the kite, I was walking backwards and tumbled into a disused well which had no parapet walls. The shades of night were then falling fast and all my comrades ran away to their homes for fear that they might be accused of having pushed the Sub-Magistrate's son into a well! But my immediate younger brother Srinivasa Rao (who was subsequently an elected member of Council and District Judge), then a tiny young fellow, with sparkling intelligence, peeped into the well, spoke aloud some words of encouragement and ran home to bring me help. The message of the accident was conveyed from home to office and my father was engaged in trying a dacoity case in which counsel from Tanjore appeared on both sides. It took him till 9 in the night to finish the depositions. He concerned himself no more than to ask one of his clerks to do what was necessary. Within about an hour several men with a big vessel came and pulled me up.

Another incident of the time may be mentioned. One of the upper subordinates of the Collector's staff assaulted a carpenter who at once filed a complaint in the Sub-Magistrate's Court. The official was tried and

fined. This created considerable heart-burning, and the whole official world was surprised at the audacity of an Indian Sub-Magistrate who had so far forgotten the prestige due to a clerk of the Collector's Office as against a temporary injury to a poor artisan. Officers high and low exclaimed with regret "Mr. Krishna Rao would deal with us in the same way if we are found fault with"! In their view the Sub-Magistrate was a dangerous person who could not be relied upon. But the Collector never spoke a word about this to my father. Shortly afterwards my father was transferred to the important charge of Kumbakonam on increase of pay.

I must here chronicle an important event. While at Vallam my father received a pressing invitation from Muthusami Iyer, (Justice Sir,) for a marriage in some village of the Tanjore District. My father and two of the Collector's clerks took casual leave and started one early morning. They had no idea of taking any children with them. But I had resolved to accompany them and followed the carriage on foot. No amount of harsh reprimand and even thrashing on the road-side could dissuade me from going and at last I won my point. It was thus as a boy that I made the acquaintance of Muthusami Iyer which lasted throughout his life.

THE TOWN HIGH SCHOOL, KUMBAKONAM.

I was a student of the Town High School which was located in two adjacent houses in the Big Street. T. Ramaswamy Iyer was the first Headmaster of the

school. He was succeeded after his unfortunate early death by K. Ramanujachariar, B.A. (subsequently Diwan Bahadur) who was known as a strict disciplinarian. I even now remember what fear he instilled into the minds of boys by his method of walking silently with a cane in his hand, concealed behind his back, and how automatically the cane used to descend from aloft on the back of the mischievous rowdy boy. Students from distant centres, such as Ceylon, Kurnool and Dharapuram, used to flock to Kumbakonam. Mr. Ramanujachariar left the school for entering Government service and was succeeded by Mr. C. Krishna Rao, a young graduate who was known to be a good English scholar. The school was then very famous as a premier educational institution.

My father was sub-magistrate of the place. He was a friend of the Headmaster who easily found subordinate teachers to teach me at home for a small remuneration. Their pay in the school was also small. If any human being deserves our commiseration, it is surely the low-paid school master who is burdened with the important charge of young minds but who can hardly sustain himself at home with two full meals every day. I was so fond of out-door games and so persistent in putting off the private tutor, that I often had the permission of my father to invite the tutor to breakfast on all possible occasions. He was so kind and good as generally to excuse my absence at home from his tuition as soon as it commenced. It was after my father's transfer to Pattukottah on promotion as

Tahsildar in about 1873, I found out to my dismay, that while I had advanced in years, my comrades had left me far behind in the school. Pattukottah had a Taluq school, but it was by far less efficient than the Kumbakonam Town High School. I remember how I had cause for considerable merriment when one day, at about 11-30 or 12 noon—it was a holiday—I called on the Headmaster who was my neighbour, merely to have a talk with him. He was a very good and a very social gentleman. I tapped the door. He opened it, asked me to sit in the inner verandah and said he would be coming back in quarter of an hour or so. He added his servant might spoil the dishes if he were not with him. He gave me a book which I was reading. After waiting for a time, I went inside straight into the kitchen, to see what the Headmaster was doing. He had just then finished his breakfast. But he was a bit startled at my sudden appearance and looked confused. Out of boyish curiosity I asked him where his servant was. He had to acknowledge that he had none, and as his wife was indisposed, he had himself to attend to the household duties including cooking. It is an excellent training and excellent trait of the Brahmin community, that many of the men know how to cook and are quite independent of the servant problem on urgent occasions when they cannot find paid labour. It is not considered *infra dig* for any one to do all the work at home from A B to Y Z if emergencies require it. I have known very high placed men taking a delight in being indepen-

dent and self-contained in this respect. However, the fault of the Headmaster lay in the perhaps excusable falsehood in which he had indulged in boasting about the non-existing servant. I had a hearty laugh, took leave of him, made up my mind at once to bid good-bye to the Pattukottah Taluq School, got my father's permission to go back to Kumbakonam and to study there.

The great mistake which some school masters generally commit is to think that their students are so stupid as not to be aware of their faults and blemishes. On the other hand the boys in whatever else they may be wanting, are very acute in detecting the foibles of their masters and in making fun of them out of school hours.

At the Kumbakonam Town High School I made some progress, after I had got rid of private tutors. Two or three incidents of the time yet remain vivid in my recollection.

One of the masters of a neighbouring class—we had then about 12 or 16 classes in two neighbouring houses in the Big Street—was one day the object of great derision. It was a Saturday and the classes assembled in the morning. It was the month of November. The weather was chill, and the early hours of the day rather cloudy and a bit dark. The master was accustomed to use snuff incessantly and had always to keep a colored handkerchief to wipe the nose at frequent intervals. That day, unfortunately, while dressing for the school, at about 6 A.M. in the somewhat dark room

in his house, he mistook the small bodice of his wife for his own handkerchief, hurriedly put it in his capacious front long coat pocket, and with his turban, walked to the school in all haste. In the class after half an hour, he unconsciously and as was his habit, pulled out the "handkerchief" and the whole class burst forth in the loudest laughter. He did not look at what he had pulled out, but was very angry with the boys and threatened them with dire chastisement for what he took as a sign of turbulent insubordination. The more he admonished the boys, the more vociferous they grew till at last, the monitor, a grown-up boy, and a sensible one, interested in the good name of the teacher, boldly went to him and whispered to him the cause of the disturbance. The poor teacher then realised his mistake, bundled up the bodice in a newspaper, gave it to the monitor to take home and told him to bring him his kerchief. It was only then that peace and order were restored in the class.

On another occasion, one of the teachers—always bent upon inflicting corporal punishment on his boys —came to grief all on a sudden. His favourite method was to close his fist and to strike on the head of the boys. In those days, we had no caps and were bare-headed in the class. One day the master happened to have a slate pencil in his hand, a long one and the sharp end was below his fingers. In a moment of great temper, at seeing a stupid answer written by one of his students on the slate, he hit him on the head with his closed fist, unconscious for the moment of the pencil

he was holding. The sharp end of the pencil penetrated the head and blood spurted from the wound. The boy showed symptoms of fainting. The whole class, and the other classes in the vicinity, were thrown into utter confusion. The news reached the Headmaster who was on the scene at once. The boy was attended to. The master was taken aside, was reprimanded and strict instructions were issued forthwith to all masters to report all cases for corporal punishment to the Headmaster.

In another class, the master had an aversion to one of the boys because he was a bit original and mischievous and always took delight in asking him to stand upon the bench. This was a constant factor as a punishment in those days. The boy was tired of standing on the bench at one stretch for hours, time after time, and one day devised a plan to put an end it. At about 12-30 in the noon on a hot day, when both the master and the pupils were weary of the heat and were waiting for the school bell to strike one o'clock, to get out of the congested room and breathe fresh air outside, he suddenly fell from the bench and lay flat on his back in the midst of the class. There was great uproar. The boy closed his eyes and would not open them. He would not respond to any calls when the master rushed to his aid, and placed his hands on his body and shook him and he showed no signs of recovery. Water was sprinkled on his face, but he lay dumb and motionless. The Headmaster, on hearing this, hastened to the class and after half-an-hour, the boy was roused from his

pretended illness! He was really none the worse for his adventure. But he had created great fright in the heart of the master and his comrades. From that day, the master never asked him to stand upon the bench!

CHAPTER III

AT THE "CAMBRIDGE OF SOUTH INDIA."

From January 1876 till December 1881 I was a student of that celebrated institution, the Government College, Kumbakonam, which was then popularly known as the Cambridge of South India. It had classes from the upper fourth up to the B.A. stage. It had the high distinction of having been manned by some of the most eminent educationists the like of whom I am yet to meet. W. A. Porter was beyond doubt one of the ablest, most conscientious and most revered of all the *Gurus* under whose watchful and paternal guidance a continuous stream of hundreds of students every year went forth to all parts of India to seek service and competence. Next came Rao Bahadur T. Gopal Rao, the veteran educationist whose sense of strict discipline and stoic simplicity of life were unequalled in the entire educational history of South Indian Colleges. Professor Ranganatha Mudaliar whose deportment, pronunciation and accent would have done credit to the best among the European professors, was posted at times for duty all the way from Madras. I believe that yet there are at least a few who remember with gratitude the names of R. V. Sreenivasa Iyer, the distinguished mathematician, Sadhu Sesha Iyer, C. Sundara Rao and B. Hanumantha Rao. I remember the pride and satisfaction which I, as

a boy, used to have in walking through the long distance from the southern side of Reddy Row's Tank street to the new college buildings on the banks of the sacred Cauvery, having at times for my companion in the hot blazing sun, now a student of the B.A. class and now a student of the Senior F.A. The feeling of comradeship and the dignified consciousness that though I was a student of the High School, I was yet a student of the same institution in which my more advanced companions were studying seemed to me to take away much of the weariness and monotony of the long walk. I cannot even now forget the fraternal smile and kindly welcome with which the more advanced and aristocratic students of the highest college classes greeted me when we met in the mornings and evenings.

S. Krishnasami Iyer, B.A., who was for nearly two decades Headmaster of the Town High School and made a great name for himself, began his career as a teacher in the Kumbakonam College. He was proficient in English literature but was weak in Mathematics. Once he failed in the B.A., still the College authorities had such a high regard for him that they overlooked his failure and gave him a teacher's place. Subsequently he passed the examination and accepted a temporary appointment in the Central College, Bangalore. I used to correspond with him in his Central College days. Once I asked him in one of my letters. "How do the Bangalore Central College students compare with those of the Kumbakonam College, taking classes of the same standard into consideration?" The reply I got from

him was singularly original and interesting and did credit to both the institutions. He said "The Bangalore students *talk* English much better than those of the Kumbakonam College. The latter *write* English much better than those of the Central College."

FREEDOM FROM RACIAL BIAS.

One of the greatest traits of Porter was his intense and insatiable affection and regard for the land of his adoption and domicile and his genuine self-sacrificing interest in the advancement of Indians as students and citizens. His home and his purse were always open to the deserving needy scholar whose educational advancement depended wholly on extraneous help. Many a brilliant student who passed the Matriculation or the F.A. examination at the top of the list, but whose parents were too poor to bear the cost of his further study in the College, applied to Porter for aid and in most cases got it. In all communities and in all countries there are in a herd one or two black sheep. At Kumbakonam also out of a large number of really indigent students, there were one or two whom God had blessed with a good fortune, but who still pretended poverty and who had easy access to Porter by virtue of their superior ability. One such student Porter had supported with funds for several years. At last one day when Porter had gone to the Railway Station to catch the Madras Mail, this favourite student met him in the Railway compartment. One of the Professors of the College was also travelling in the same compartment.

After the train was in motion, Porter with sentiments of satisfaction, referred to the student who had just then taken leave of them, and his noteworthy achievements in the various examinations and briefly narrated for how many years he had supported the student and how much money he had spent on him. The Professor could not resist laughter and told the revered Principal that he had been duped by the student, as he was a member of an exceedingly well-to-do family quite able to support himself and even a few other students. Porter even after this disclosure in a particular case did not discontinue helping poor students. Nor did he rebuke the entire community of Hindus as cheats. He knew human nature all over the world and thought that the matter was not worth even mention to others. His love for India and his regard and affection for Indians never underwent any diminution. It was this entire absence of racial bias which made him the idol of the people of Kumbakonam. If Englishmen and Indians would as a rule show the same spirit and avoid reviling wholesale entire communities for the failings of a few, then the present deplorable tension in India between various communities and between Indians and Englishmen would cease to exist. The reverence with which Porter was regarded by even the bulk of the uneducated people is illustrated by the following anecdote. One evening he took into his head to visit the shrine of *Sarangapani Swami*, a temple of great local reputation and sanctity. He went there accompanied by a few of his influential Indian friends. It was about 10 o'clock

at night. That day there was a procession of the temple deity within the large precincts of the temple. Porter and his associates were in the inner compound watching the procession from a distance. As soon as the temple servants and authorities in charge of the procession heard of the arrival of Porter and saw him at a distance they reverently halted for a while, and went to him with a tray of fruits and flowers, and did him the honors of the temple generally, reserved for distinguished visitors of their own community. Porter was struck with amazement at this exhibition and asked them why for his sake, they temporarily stopped their march. One of the more courageous and more thoughtful among the priests, who was innocent of English stepped to the front and exclaimed in Tamil. "We have in you a living God who has advanced our sons and grandsons by your care to positions of trust and responsibility. So in honouring you we feel we are honouring our God." Porter was visibly affected by these kindly expressions of a people's affection.

INTEREST IN JOURNALISM.

It was during this period that I was attracted irresistibly to the weekly edition of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* which had established an undying reputation for unsurpassed independence. It was recognized as the staunchest friend of the Indian States and as the most fervent admirer of all that was Indian. Its spirit of fearlessness was often illustrated by the funniest anecdotes then current among students that the two

brothers who were editing the paper Babu Shishir Kumar Ghose and Babu Motilal Ghose were alternately in jail for sedition or defamation all round the year!

A friend from Coimbatore who came to see me happened to have one day a very broad sheet of one of the Bombay Anglo Indian Dailies. I read the leading article and the following remarkable sentence made a strong impression on me. "The mantle of eloquence has fallen on the shoulders of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao and the Viceroy himself lags behind him in the race". It may be mentioned that the Viceroy referred to was Lord Lytton the great literary Viceroy. So high a compliment to one of our illustrious Indian statesman, was most welcome and thenceforward I began to take a genuine interest in studying the life and career of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao.

CHAPTER IV

TANDALAM GOPALA RAO.

I shall devote the whole of this chapter to the few incidents connected with the life and labours of T. Gopala Rao, within my personal knowledge. He had established a lasting reputation for punctuality. On several days I noticed that the College Writer, instead of looking at the time-piece and asking the peon to ring the College bell, was peeping through the window on the road-side and ordered the College bell to be rung as soon as he caught sight of the bullock coach of the Principal. I enquired one day why the College clock had been relegated to such insignificance. I had a suspicion that it was a piece of official "zulum." But the reply of the Writer was "My dear boy, our clock goes wrong on several days, but the Principal invariably arrives in time. His appearance is far more reliable than any time-piece or watch that I have ever had." The report of the Writer was perfectly true and Gopala Rao's punctuality was a widely accepted and admired fact. Gopala Rao often lost himself while lecturing, and in his enthusiastic outbursts used to forget that the hour for his lesson had long passed away. One day in taking a class between 12 and 1 he retained the class till 2 o'clock, losing sight of the leisure hour. A poor relative, dependent on the Principal, was bringing him

lunch every day. On the day I refer to, after waiting till 1-45 noon, the servant consumed all the lunch! After hours of hard labour, Gopala Rao peeped into his chamber and found his servant merry after cleaning all the vessels! The Principal with his eye-brows knit and in a severe tone, demanded an explanation for such strange folly. The latter who had a name for mental aberration, boldly replied. "Respected sir, You used to come punctually every day at one o'clock. To-day, seeing that you did not make your appearance till 1-45, I inferred that you were not in need of your lunch and instead of wasting it, used it myself. Am I to blame or have you been very late?" Gopala Rao thanked him profusely, admitted his fault and walked away hungry for his next hour class.

A GREAT TEACHER OF ENGLISH.

Gopala Rao was a master of English and was known as one of the best English Professors. He took a special delight in teaching Milton and Shakespeare. I had the invaluable benefit of attending his class when he took Milton's Paradise Lost, Book I, and Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice. He used to repeat the whole of Milton's works for hours and it was a great intellectual treat to hear him on such occasions. One of the English Civilian Sub-Collectors of Kumbakonam applied to him for permission to attend one of his classes while he was teaching Shakespeare. The permission was granted and the British Civilian went away mightily pleased with the manner in which this Indian

Principal had handled one of the greatest poets of England. One day while teaching Shakespeare, Gopala Rao asked the students to compare Shakespeare and Kalidasa and to give their verdict. One or two of the most courageous students attempted a comparison but failed to carry it to any satisfactory conclusion. The Principal himself took up the task, and after one hour of strenuous explanation, holding forth eloquently on the merits of the English and the Indian dramatist, pronounced the following judgment. "Out of a part of Shakespeare's brain, you can create a Kalidasa."

My critical bent of mind was with me when I heard the above and while I felt gratified with Gopala Rao's appreciation of Shakespeare, I had a doubt whether his knowledge of Sanskrit was sufficient to enable him to appreciate duly all the merits of Kalidasa. At any rate I knew that the bulk of my countrymen might demur to accept his opinion as final.

One day while Gopala Rao and an European Missionary were travelling in a train, the latter condemned in unmeasured language the Hindu system of child marriages as barbarous. Gopala Rao, after patiently listening to his English companion, remarked at the time of getting down from the carriage. "You marry whom you love, we love whom we marry, which is the nobler?"

HIS LAST DAYS.

The Madras Educational Department was at times very badly managed by the Government and it drew forth a curse from no less a personage than W. A.

Porter. In one of his speeches at the Porter Town Hall, Kumbakonam, which I had the good fortune of listening to, Porter bittely complained that the prize appointment *viz.*, the office of Director of Public Instruction, was snatched away once by a soldier and at another time by a civilian, and said that thenceforward no first rate English educationist would ever care to enter the Madras Educational Service.

Gopala Rao suffered a great humiliation at the hands of Government in being denied the permanent principalship of the Kumbakonam College, the acting tenure of which he had at various times held and that too, most successfully. The one idea of most educated Indians has been to justify their selection to high office by sterling merit. Gopala Rao had in abundance this pride of patriotism but Civilian idiosyncrasies deprived him of his hard-earned prize.

In one of my visits during his last illness I requested him to give me as a memento of his affection to me a copy of his Memorial to Government. He readily granted my prayer. It has since seemed to me that the copy of the memorial was a precious heir-loom, worthy of being published on a fitting occasion. I am glad to have been able to preserve it for more than 40 years. When I was talking to one of my most distinguished Indian acquaintances, the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Sastry he said to me that he tried his best to get a copy of the memorial, but was informed that even Gopala Rao's family was not able to keep one. The memorial is in the language of Gopala Rao and contains a short

account of his official career. I have no doubt that it will be read with great interest. I omit as unnecessary all the tabular statements embodied in the petition. It is dated June 1882, Kumbakonam, and addressed to Mr. C. G. Master, Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras.

THE MEMORIAL.

"Sir,—The lamented death of Mr. F. S. Evans, Acting Principal of the Presidency College, having created a vacancy in the 3rd grade, I beg to submit for the favourable consideration of Government my claims to promotion to the same. My claims have been so often overlooked on previous occasions, that I am constrained to think that my services are but imperfectly known to Government; and I beg therefore to request that you will be so good as to lay the following statement of them before His Excellency the Governor in Council.

2. I am a Public Servant of 32 years' standing, 5 years in the Revenue and 27 years in the Educational Department.

3. My service in the Revenue Department may claim a passing notice. During the last 3 years of it, I held the responsible though ill-paid position of Manager of the Department of Public Works, (then administered by the Revenue authorities), in the office of the Collector of Tanjore, a position which I resigned upon finding that the Collector had decided to give away to another a salary which had been sanctioned by Government for the work I was doing. How that work

was done will be shown by the following extracts from two letters written to me at this period by Mr. (afterwards the Honourable) William Holloway, so eminent as a Judge of the Madras High Court, who, while Head Assistant Collector of Tanjore, knew me very intimately:—

"Tranquebar 16th May (1853):—I greatly regret to hear that you are so sick. I fear that you have been exerting yourself beyond your strength. Although those under you may not be trustworthy, the remedy cannot be found in doing more than human nature is able to bear. You must make every man do his own fair proportion of work, but of about ten pieces of work, overlook one from beginning to end, without allowing even a suspicion as to which you will choose."

"Bezwadah, 8th June 1854.....I had previously heard of your resignation of your appointment because you had not been promoted. I will frankly say that I consider that the appointment which you desired ought to have been given to you in consideration of your very able and very faithful services in the department. I do not agree with Mr. Forbes, (the Collector) and would in his place have gladly promoted you."

4. My educational service is commensurate with the age of this College, for I entered it as acting 1st Assistant on the day on which it was opened as a Provincial School (October 19, 1854). I had received no school education; yet it was never said that any subject of scholastic study entrusted to me was ill-taught.

5. The Madras University was established in September 1857. I matriculated in the same month, and took a first class in the B.A. Examination of 1859. This success was thought remarkable by those who knew that my only teachers, so far as Western literature and Science were concerned, had been my books. I received the warm congratulations of my European friends. Mr. Holloway wrote: "I write a line to congratulate you upon your success and to say that no one rejoices more heartily than I, that excellent abilities directed by admirable industry have obtained their almost invariable reward.....My letters are not many but I could not resist my desire of telling you, on this interesting occasion how sincerely I rejoice in your present success, and desire your future happiness and prosperity." Mr. Forbes, then member of the Governor-General's Legislative Council, wrote from Calcutta as follows:—"Although I have not heard from you to tell me, I cannot doubt that you are the man who has taken his B.A. degree at the University lately, and I am unwilling that you should suppose that I am not sufficiently interested in you to write and offer you my congratulations. I think that success is very highly creditable to your talents and your industry, and I hope that you will let it stimulate you to further exertion."

6. Meantime, the mathematical teaching at the Kumbakonam Provincial School had devolved chiefly upon me, and I had the satisfaction of hearing Mr. E. B. Powell, justly regarded as the father of higher education in this Presidency, declare, judging from the attain-

ments of Kumbakonam students who proceeded to the Presidency College, of which he was the Principal, that the quality of my work "was nowhere surpassed." This opinion led to my appointment, for a brief period in 1860 and for nearly 11 months in 1862-63 to act as Professor of Mathematics at the Presidency College.

On the former occasion my work could not be separated from that of the Principal. In 1862, the reports of the Mathematical Examiners were very favourable.

7. Mr. Porter assumed charge of the Kumbakonam Provincial School in 1863; and the value of the assistance he received from me has been acknowledged by himself.

In 1866 he was appointed to act as Principal of the Presidency College, and I was left in charge of the Provincial School. It was a critical year for the institution, for on the work of that year depended its chance of being immediately raised to the status of a College.

How that work was done is recorded in Mr. Porter's Annual Report for 1867-68. He says:—"I take this opportunity of stating that the progress of the School during that year was most satisfactory, and its success, judged by the University Examinations, greater than in any previous year."

8. In 1868, I was appointed to act as Head Master of the Provincial School at Calicut. Mr. Porter regarded my transfer as a loss to Kumbakonam College. In his report for 1868-69, he says:—"This was the first year that students, who completed their collegiate course

here went in for the degree of B.A. I cannot help regretting that at so critical a time when the work of the College was to be tested on a new and untried ground, the great experience and ability of Mr. Gopala Rao were wanting to us." The Calicut Provincial School was in a state of chronic disorganization, and it was impossible to restore it to efficiency in a short time; but that no efforts were wanting on my part to improve its condition will be seen from the fact that the inhabitants of Calicut sent up a memorial to Government praying for my confirmation there. They spoke in very flattering terms of the work I was doing; and the Director of Public Instruction, in his report on their memorial, which was referred to him by the Government, said:—"It is only right for me to state that I cordially agree with the subscribers to the letter in the high estimate they have formed of Mr. Gopala Rao's qualifications and service." (G. O. No. 37 of February 16, 1869.)

9. During the official years 1870-71 and 1871-72, I acted as Inspector of the 6th Educational Division. This temporary promotion I owed entirely to the Government of Lord Napier. It was deprecated by the Director of Public Instruction who seems to have apprehended that it would lead to unpleasant friction between the Revenue and Educational Departments. He soon became convinced, however, that his fears were unfounded, and always expressed a favourable opinion of the way in which I acquitted myself in my new capacity. In a letter to Government embodied in G. O. No. 9, dated the 3rd April, 1872, he says:—"Mr. Gopala

Rao has performed his duties in the 6th Division in a careful and conscientious manner, and has done his best to render sounder the instruction given in the Division;" and, unless my memory greatly deceives me, Government have recorded, either in their Administration or some other Report for 1870-71 or 1871-72 that the experiment of employing a native of this country as an Inspector of Schools had been tried, and had proved a decided success.

10. From May 1872 to near the close of 1874, the charge of Kumbakonam College was held by me.

In 1872 the institution had no B.A. class—a result of the extension of the F.A. course in 1870 from one to two years, and the F.A. Class, as is shown by Mr. Porter's report for 1871-72, consisted of very indifferent material. The F.A. results, as might have been expected, were only moderate; but those of the Matriculation Examination "were very good, and surpassed the results of any other institution."

The year 1873 showed a decided improvement. The Director of Public Instruction said in his report for 1873-74 (para. 34)—"The results at the Matriculation Examination in 1873-74 were most creditable; 68 youths went up, and of the 53 that passed no fewer than 19 obtained places in the first class. The success at the higher tests though not so striking, was decidedly good; and Mr. Gopala Rao has proved, what was anticipated from his career, that he can worthily discharge the duties of Principal of the College to which he has so long been attached."

The results of 1874 were still better. Reviewing those of the Matriculation and F.A. Examinations, the Director of Public Instruction said: "From the above return it appears that the Provincial College, Kumbakonam, sent up 27 candidates to the F.A. and 76 to the Matriculation Examination in December last; of the former number, 22 were successful, 7 being placed in the first class; of the latter 62 passed, no fewer than 33 being ranked in the first class. These results are highly creditable to the late Acting Principal and his Senior Assistants; and the Director of Public Instruction observes that Mr. Gopala Rao has most satisfactorily established his fitness to preside over the second Government College in the Presidency, should a vacancy occur in the Principalship."

The notice of the Provincial College in the Report on Public Instruction for 1874-75, by Mr. E. Thompson, Acting Director of Public Instruction, is as follows:— "Mr. Porter returned from England towards the close of 1874 and resumed charge of the Provincial College, Kumbakonam, from Mr. Gopala Rao, under whose able management, the College had prospered for two years and a half. The success of this College at the University Examinations of 1874-75 was most remarkable. The three examination lists of the year were all headed by Kumbakonam students, and the number of failures was unusually small. This striking success is attributed by the Principal to a higher standard being maintained in the Junior department than is usually found in other schools, to the strenuous exertions of the Assistant

Masters, and lastly to an amount of personal effort on the part of Mr. Gopala Rao, which cannot be expected from many men. (Public Instruction Report 1874-75.)

11. During the three and a half years following 1874, I acted twice again as Principal of this College, once as Inspector of the 4th Division, and once as Professor of History at the Presidency College.

12. In 1878 I was admitted into the graded service by my appointment to the chair of History at the Presidency College, and since June of the same year have had charge of this institution as Principal *Sub pro tem*: with what success, I shall briefly note:—

The results of the University Examinations in 1878-79, were pronounced by Colonel MacDonald to be "as usual highly creditable." (Proceedings No. 2031, May 15th 1879.)

13. The results of 1879-80 were of a chequered character. In the F.A. Examination the College passed a larger number than it has ever done before or since; but, owing to bad material, its success in the B.A. was very poor. Failures from this cause must happen to the best teachers; witness, to note one instance out of many which might be adduced, the success of the Presidency College in the B.A. Examination of 1872-73, in which, out of a class of 28 students who had been taught by Messrs. Thompson and Porter, only 8 were successful.

In 1880-81 the B.A. results were exceptionally good. Seventy per cent. of the candidates passed, two of them

heading the list. The F.A. results, considering the unusual severity of the Examination, were fair.

The results of 1881-82 have likewise been very favourable. As regards the percentage of passes, Kumbakonam College is considerably ahead of all other leading Colleges, the number of graduates is greater than in any previous year; and the number of F.A.'s in the first class is more than thrice that for any other institution.

It is perhaps not known to Government that the work I do at this College is precisely the same as that done by Mr. Thompson at the Presidency College, or by Mr. Miller at the Christian College. English literature is the subject I teach, and a reference to the books of the University will show that Kumbakonam students generally acquit themselves as well as Madras students in that subject, and sometimes better, notwithstanding the superior facilities for acquiring a knowledge of idiomatic English afforded by Colleges largely officered by Europeans and by residence in the metropolis of the Presidency.

It is a noteworthy fact that only 3 students out of 27 failed in English at the B.A. Examination in 1881, and only 3 out of 29 in 1882. I may also mention that only 10 out of 82 candidates failed in English in the F.A. Examination in December last.

14. I may in this place mention that, in 1879, the Government of India conferred on me the title of Rao Bahadur as a personal distinction, in recognition of my educational service.

15. I beg to solicit attention to the sub-joined tables, one showing the periods during which this institution, since it became a College, has been respectively under Mr. Porter's charge and mine, and the other showing the F.A. and B.A. results of each year.

The above tables will show that I have actually held the charge of this College for quite as long a period as Mr. Porter and upon the whole with no less success.

There are two special points in my favour which I may note. Only twice in the history of the college has the B.A. list been headed by one of its alumni. (1875, 1881); and only once has one of its graduates taken a first class (1875); and these exceptional distinctions have been won by students who never had the benefit of Mr. Porter's teaching during their B.A. course.

The proportion of the aggregate number of B.A.'s and F.A.'s shown in Table 2 which may be credited to the seven years of my management, may be calculated by the help of Table 1, remembering that the B.A. course has always extended over two years, but the F.A. prior to 1870, occupied only one year. I find the proportion to be 87 B.A.'s and 247 F.A's, or ever one-half in each case.

16. I hope I shall not be thought to be putting myself into comparison with Mr. Porter. Nothing is farther from my thoughts. I am comparing not myself with him, but my work as Principal of Kumbakonam College with his in the same capacity, and I know that his own opinion of that work is higher than can be

inferred from the figures I have collected. "I know not," he said in a public speech delivered in Kumbakonam in December last, "who they are in this country that are entitled to look down on Mr. Gopala Rao as a teacher"; and I have heard him speak of my work in private conversation in terms still more complimentary.

17. Such is a brief sketch of my career as a public servant; and it is impossible for me upon a review of it, not to be reminded of the small recognition, in a substantial sense, which it has received.

Twenty years ago, I filled the chair of mathematics at the Presidency College for nearly a year with admitted efficiency. I had then been 13 years in Government Service, (8 in the Education Department), and my work had always been regarded as of exceptional merit. Yet I was not confirmed in the mathematical chair.

I should have quitted the Department after such treatment, had not Mr. Powell held out to me the hope that the very first vacancy in the Headmastership of a Provincial School would be given to me, *i.e.*, that my salary would be raised to Rs. 500 per mensem at the earliest possible date. This hope was never fulfilled. Vacancy after vacancy occurred at Calicut, at Mangalore, at Bellary; but they were all given away to others and though I was occasionally appointed to "act" on Rs. 500, my substantive pay was not raised to Rs. 500 till July 1873, *i.e.*, till 10 years later.

My appointment to the acting Inspectorship of the 6th Division in 1870 was the result of a strong representation I made to Sir A. Arbuttnot and to Lord Napier of the hard usuage I had met with. I showed how illusory the hopes held out by the Director had proved, and pointed out that though I had not had the good fortune to be made the Headmaster of a Provincial School, my claims to the acting Inspectorship were superior, to those of most Headmasters, in as much as it could not be denied, that as first Assistant Master at Kumbakonam, I had always taught more advanced and much larger classes and with greater success, not to mention my work as acting Professor of Mathematics in 1862, as Mr. Porter's *locum tenens* at Kumbakonam in 1866, and as acting Headmaster in Calicut Provincial School in 1868. The Government admitted the justice of my plea, and preferred my claims to those of Mr. Ormsby, the Headmaster of the Mangalore Provincial School, who had been recommended by the Director of Public Instruction; yet Mr. (now Doctor) John Bradhaw, who succeeded Mr. Ormsby and was my official subordinate in 1871, and whose services since could sustain no comparison with mine, was in 1875, promoted, in disregard of my claims, to the Professorship of History at the Presidency College; an appointment of which, it is well-known, he drew the pay but never did the work, I drew comfort from the thought that a vacancy in the Principalship of Kumbakonam College by Mr. Porter's promotion would at once give me a progressive pay rising from Rs. 700 to Rs. 800; but the new rules of

the Graded Service intervened to dispell the illusion, and showed that whatever chance there might be of my getting Mr. Porter's work, there was none of my getting his pay. Mr. Porter sought to console me by the observation that though the new rules would operate to my disadvantage at first, yet in the long run I should be a gainer by them. He forgot that after a 25 years' race, I could hardly have breath for another "long run"; and events soon showed that even if it were possible for me to take a new lease of life, the chances of my "gaining by the new rules" were very slender; for not long after, Mr. Metcalfe, the Principal of the Rajahmundry College, who came out to India in the 18th the year of my Educational Service, and was not in the Graded Service at all when I was appointed to the chair of History at the Presidency College, was placed in the third grade; and at a later period, Mr. Bickle, the Principal of the Madras Normal School, who is not in the Graded Service, was appointed to an acting position in the third grade, which I believe he still holds.

18. The marginal table classifies my educational service according to the grades of appointments in which it has been rendered. The second mastership of the Presidency College and the first assistant mastership of the Kumbakonam Provincial School, I have placed in the lowest class; but it must be borne in mind that my work in both was higher so far as teaching was concerned, than that of the Headmasters of other Provincial Schools. I beg also to point out that my

work as first Assistant of this College was that of a Professor, or rather of more than one Professor, for, during several years I had to teach English, Mathematics and Moral Philosophy at once to the B.A. class.

My service in graded appointments alone amounts to very nearly 12 years, and therefore exceeds the entire service of Mr. Metcalfe and Dr. Bradshaw. It is true that the greater part of this service was rendered in appointments held only in an officiating capacity, not substantively; but I trust that the foregoing narrative will show that, if this was so, it was through no default of desert on my part. It did not affect the quality of my work, but only made it cheap, so much so, that I believe it will not be possible to find, in the history of any department of the Public Service, a case of disproportion, so glaring between work and remuneration. If a list of educational officers were prepared, arranged in the order of ratio of aggregate work done, (quality as well as quantity being taken into account), to aggregate pay received, I feel most confident that the first place on the list must be mine.

19. If the facts I have laid before Government satisfy them that I have just grounds for complaining of the treatment I have received in the Department, and that my services entitle me to a better place in the graded list than has been assigned me, I humbly request that they will be pleased to appoint me to the vacancy which has now occurred in the third grade.

20. I beg leave to say a word touching the intention of Government, now generally known, to remove me from the charge of this College. My fitness to preside over it has been emphatically declared by Messrs. Powell and Porter, the two greatest educationists this Presidency has known; and I have shown that I have actually held the charge of it for quite as long a period as Mr. Porter and with equal success. I have been connected with the institution, with but 2 months' interruption, ever since it was founded, and I have contributed, how much Government will now be in a position to judge, to its prosperity. I shall be pardoned, I hope, if I cannot contemplate without regret the impending severance of my connection with it.

The Director of Public Instruction was pleased to inform me that there were political objections to my confirmation. I have endeavoured in vain to conjecture what these objections might be. It is obvious that they must have reference either to my nationality or to my personal character. The educational Despatch of 1854 and Her Majesty's gracious Proclamation of 1858 alike forbid the former supposition. I am therefore driven to the conclusion that they must refer to my personal character. If so, they must involve serious charges against me; and I trust that His Excellency the Governor-in-Council will not deem me presumptuous if I submit that I am entitled to know what those charges are, and not to be condemned without being heard in my defence.

21. Begging, in conclusion, the pardon of Government for having taken up their time with so lengthy a

communication, and for any improprieties of expression into which I may have been betrayed by my feeling,

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
Principal,

CHAPTER V

TERMINATION OF THE COLLEGE COURSE

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS

University examinations are at times, if not invariably, some thing like a lottery. In some years the percentage of passes is fair; in others it is horribly low. It is not only the ability of the student, but also the idiosyncracies of the examiners in setting papers and valuing them that affect the success of the students. The year 1878 was notorious for the slaughter of the students in the Matriculation Examination. I was discouraged by my failure in that year, and in 1879 I decided to appear for the U. C. S. Examination which was a passport for entertainment in the Public Service. But there was the age bar and students below a certain age and attending the College, had to get a certificate from the Principal. This was a difficult task, as at the time no less a personage than Gopala Rao was at the head of the College. For a Sixth Class student and for one who had failed, to approach this high functionary was not easy. When I sent in my card one morning, Gopala Rao gave me audience and tried his best to dissuade me from appearing for the U. C. S. His advice was to stick to the College and pass all the examinations. But when I explained to him how the Matriculation might at times prove very delusive and

one's life cannot be sacrificed at the altar of the examiner's whims and fancies, he signed my application form, and gave me permission. I regarded it as no ordinary victory. In 1879 I passed both the Matriculation and the U. C. S. The Principal when he met me in the F.A. Class, congratulated me and the good opinion he thus formed of me lasted all his life. The F.A. Examination of 1881 was again a lottery. Arithmetic was then one of the subjects. I had answered only three questions and on coming out I found to my dismay that my answers were all wrong! In Algebra and Euclid I answered only a few questions. So I was almost certain that I could not get a pass. My companions in study were two; one C. V. Ramachandra Iyer, the elder brother of the late Mr. Gangadhara Iyer, B.A. a retired officer of the D. P. W., Madras and Vijendra Row, a school-master. The former was an able Mathematician. He had cleared the Arithmetic paper, done well in all the subjects. We three were the prime movers in starting the High School at Coimbatore of which I shall speak later and our results were announced in 1882 when we were playing the high role of Masters. I had not the mind to be inquisitive about my result, as my heart sank within me, when I remembered my wonderful performance. What was my surprise when the "Madras Mail" which contained the names of successful candidates contained mine while it omitted those of my friends! The "Fort Saint George Gazette" only confirmed this list. Even to-day I wonder at such an examination.

FAMOUS FAMILIES

One of the premier Hindu families in my neighbourhood at Kumbakonam was that of Dewan Bahadur Pattabirama Iyer, B.A., B.L., the father of the Hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer. For three generations this family has maintained its high prestige in a remarkable manner. No one can cherish with greater gratification than myself the realised fact of one of the members of this family ascending by dint of personal merit to the exalted position of an Executive Member of the Madras Government and Viceroy's Council. His grandfather, Mr. Ramaswami Iyer, was a Tahsildar in the Tanjore District and had retired with credit at the time I was at school. He had acquired a name for honesty and strict discipline and before his retirement his official uprightness had induced some of the rowdy malcontents to assault him during the night. He suffered at their hands. But his iron constitution and indomitable courage enabled him to survive so serious and so sudden an attack. In the evening of his life, his austere cleanliness, piety and robust health, won for him universal esteem and regard. On my way to the Cauvery, every morning, I used to meet this venerable figure. His elder son Pattabi, as he was then popularly called, passed all the University examinations first in the First Class. This student covered himself and the College with glory by his rare success in his studies. Fair in appearance, strong in build, always with a smiling face, generally of a retiring and reticent disposition, Pattabirama Iyer had early in life, been

marked by all as one bound to achieve high distinction. Ramaswami Iyer was not only fortunate in his son but also in his son-in-law, Mr. K. Sundararaman, M.A., the eminent educationist and scholar whose early career was a source of inspiration to young men who came in contact with him. It was while at school that I was benefited by the mere sight of such diligence and ability.

The other Hindu families of local eminence were those of Reddi Rao—Dewan of Travancore—Wallace Ramachandra Rao, Raghunathaswami Rao, and Varahakulam Rangaswami Iyengar whose descendants Mr. Thiruvenkatachariar and Lakshmivaraha Iyengar are widely known now. V. Bashyam Iyengar (subsequently the Hon. Justice Sir) was, about the time I refer to, sub-Registrar of Kumbakonam. He was living in the northern side of Reddi Rao's tank. His office was in the same building in which my father's office was located. In my morning walk to the river side, I met Bashyam Iyengar and also while entering my father's office at times. Scrupulously tidy in dress and appearance, simple in habits, Bashyam Iyengar then in the prime of early manhood, was the very picture of a scholar bent on study and work, speaking few words and averse to all demonstration. None or few who were known to him then could have prophesied that he would one day rise to the position of a legal luminary that would shed such a lustre and hold in dismay even the best judicial acumen of the West.

By the year 1876 Mr. H. S. Thomas had become Collector of Tanjore and he began an anti-Brahmin campaign. Venkaswamy Rao (the Huzur Sheristedar, a brother of Gopala Rao) was fortunate enough to get a transfer on promotion to Madras. My father incurred the wrath of the Collector who degraded him to the position of a Taluk Sheristedar. This official incident had a direct bearing on my education, and it is this official blow which induced me to give up my studies in the Kumbakonam College in 1882. For we were a large family of six brothers and one sister and parents, and the idea that I alone consumed a good portion of my father's pay for my separate educational establishment at Kumbakonam, was very repugnant to me. But to leave the college was very easy, though to find out a good career was most difficult.

Among Indians many important problems of life are left to chance and environment. Hardly any fathers of sons have the ability and the inclination to study closely the bent of mind of their wards and to advise them. The purely literary education that is imparted in our schools and Colleges does not equip us to take at once to any remunerative work.

During the times I refer to, graduates and undergraduates, usually entered the calling of teachers and took a pleasure in opening new schools. Opening of the Native High School at Kumbakonam by three distinguished graduates, Dewan Bahadur Appu Sastriar, Venkatarama Sastriar and Raghavachariar, had awakened a

keen desire in several of the students to take to the profession of teaching and to open new schools wherever needed. Though I was studying in Kumbakonam, Coimbatore was the native place of my ancestors and my father had migrated from that district to distant Tanjore. I had received representations from friends at Coimbatore that the starting of a new educational institution would be most welcome and would receive the ardent support of several leading gentlemen. While preparing for the F.A. Examination in 1881, I chalked out a scheme and finding kindred spirits falling in with my views, we decided upon it and issued the prospectus in January 1882.

MY AMBITIONS

Before I left the College I cherished, as a boy, two ambitions. One was to become a journalist and the other to go on a tour round the whole world. In the official world of Tanjore, though newspapers were read the prevailing opinion at the time was, that as a rule journalists were on the whole a dangerous set of people who might be treated with consideration in public but never worthy of confidence and as regards correspondents to newspapers they were looked upon altogether as merely fit only to be shunned. The more I came into contact with such opinions, the more enthusiastic I became in wishing to enter a field of activity so full of excitement and of public utility. By a strange coincidence of circumstances I was able to realise the first

ambition. The second I have, by force of circumstances, been compelled to postpone to the next birth.

At this stage, I may well refer to an incident which would show how even in the case of mighty intellects and vast resources, their ambitions are scarcely realised. A few years before the demise of Mahadeva Govinda Ranade, the eminent scholar, the ardent patriot, the consistent advocate of industrial, political and social reforms, I asked him what the ambitions of his life were. In his inimitable way, after taking thought for a few minutes, the illustrious judge replied to me thus: "My ambitions in life are three: (1) to settle down at Poona after retirement and to edit a journal of my own; (2) to visit England and to awaken the interest of friends of India in Indian political reform, and (3) lastly to be born again and again in India to work patiently for her uplift." The venerable judge added that he was afraid it was too late for him to go to England, especially with his infirmities. But alas! even the modest ambition of spending a few years of retirement in editing a journal in his own native place which he loved most was denied by destiny!

CHAPTER VI

THE COIMBATORE NATIVE HIGH SCHOOL

In what all diverse ways, indigenous efforts have to struggle will be apparent from some of the details which I chronicle below, connected with the starting and management of the Native High School.

THE STAFF

Our first anxiety was to secure the services of an able graduate who would carry weight with the public as the head of the institution. We could not promise him any fixed remuneration except in the shape of a share of the residue from the total income from fees after meeting all the incidental charges and the pay of the entire staff. In the course of our search we happened to come across one Mr. Viswanatha Sastri a favourite student of Porter and Gopala Rao, a graduate of several years' standing, an able mathematician and a good English scholar—rather a rare combination. He had strayed into distant and insanitary Kurnool and worked his way up gradually till he reached the somewhat respectable position of the Head-clerk of the Collector's Office on about Rs. 150 a month. But his bad luck soon prevailed. He fell a victim to constant attacks of malaria, and developed asthma. He wisely resigned his appointment, came back to Kumbakonam and was looking for some job. He fell in with our view

and we made him the Headmaster. In Coimbatore we wanted to introduce for the first time, in the educational annals of the place, instruction in Science and Sanskrit.

We were looking for an able science graduate, and to our agreeable surprise one Soumya Narayana Iyengar, B.A. the very incarnation of quietness—a favourite student of Doctor Miller who had won the gold medal for proficiency in science, applied for a post and accepted a pittance of a salary. Even in the eighties of the last century, students of great academic distinction found it so hard to get a living wage. For Sanskrit, we selected one Mr. Vijendrachar, a learned pundit. This gentleman, now full of age held in great respect by the community, lives in Coimbatore Fort. Mr. C. G. Harihara Sastry, B.A., Dewan Peishkar of Pudukottah, had quarrelled with Sir Seshia Sastry, the Dewan Regent, had taken leave without pay for a year and applied to me for temporary service. His father was the Sanskrit Munshi in the Kumbakonam Town High School, and I had great respect for him. We immediately gave him a place and thus very soon the school had a distinguished staff, all struggling on the lowest emoluments. Once we were misled by certificates. We were in need of a graduate in mathematics and in response to an advertisement we got a letter from one who had taken a high place in mathematics from the Cambridge of South India. The salary offered was only Rs. 40 and the applicant was one of several years standing as a teacher. I wondered how mathematical proficiency and experience had gone so cheap in

the market. I immediately wired to him, but soon I was undeceived. On the very first day on which I received him at the Railway station, I found he was stone deaf! His class provided merriment for his students and they never took him seriousiy. I and my colleagues were very kind to him and at the first available opportunity we passed him on to some other institution in a distant place giving him high credentials. Viswanatha Sastriar died after working for a year or two. Instead of being content with the men we had, our imagination led us to distant Bengal. I applied to Babu Motilal Ghose, Editor of the "Patrika", to select an M.A. in English and Sanskrit. He sent one Mr. Rakaldas Chakravarti. This was prior to the establishment of the Indian National Congress, when there were few opportunities for personal intercourse and exchange of thought between Bengalis and Madrasis. Pundit Shivanatha Sastri, the Brahmo Missionary, was the familiar figure of Bengal known in South India. Rakaldas was a good man but his pedantic English and queer pronunciation soon scared away the boys. The school went low in its financial condition and he went back to Calcutta. Even then the presence of this gentleman in Coimbatore roused not a little astonishment in the local official circles, but he was so good that we were not put to any trouble. He wanted to stay permanently in South India if possible and even applied for the post of Head-clerk in the Salem Collector's office which had fallen vacant. He showed me his application but I had a doubt whether the Collector

could make it out at all. It was in such highflown hyperbolic diction!

THE INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS

The Inspector of Schools was in those days a very high officer, carrying with him a dignity of his own, generally a member of the ruling caste, and tried to emulate the authority of the Collector of the district. Just then the Middle School Examination had been newly instituted and only schools recognised by the department were allowed to send up candidates. This provision invested the minor Gods of the Department with despotic powers which they were so glad to avail themselves of. My school had aroused sentiments of great bitterness among the older institutions and a large and powerful array of opponents had poisoned the mind of the then Inspector of Schools. I shall call him Mr. G. He was a linguist, was an author and a strict disciplinarian. One of his students by name V. Subba Rao, the descendant of a premier Hindu family whose ancestors held high positions in Cochin, assumed the financial responsibility of the School and was the nominal Manager. He was employed in the District Court. Mr. V. S. was held in high respect both by Europeans and Indians, and at times he was in correspondence with His Highness, the great literary Maharajah of Travancore. Mr. V. S. took me to Mr. G.; as it was necessary to propitiate the good-will of the Inspector of Schools to get recognition and grants. In those days our first and foremost duty was to win sitting space for ourselves and to maintain our self-respect. We had to

fight out inch by inch. Both Mr. G. and Mr. V. S. were comfortably seated and when I entered the room in the Travellers' Bungalow, I found a seat at some distance. Immediately I drew it near and made myself comfortable! This act of self-assertion displeased Mr. G. and I soon found that I had paved the way for the out burst of a storm. For the sake of brevity and clearness I put the substance of my interview in the direct from; Q. represents questions put by Mr. G. and A. represents my answers.

Q.—Have you passed through the Training College?

A.—No.

Q.—How many of your teachers in the School have undergone training?

A.—None.

Q.—How dare you open a school, all of you being untrained men?

A.—In the other two High Schools in the town, none are trained men.

Q.—But they have all had long experience. You have none.

A.—How am I and my colleagues to get experience unless we are allowed to practise the profession? In the Kumbakonam College and Town High School most of the teachers are untrained men, but they do their work very satisfactorily. Only sometime ago, an untrained reacher who was employed in the Kumbakonam College

was offered a place in the Central College, Bangalore. I can quote many such instances.

Q.—What is your mother tongue?

A.—Kannada.

Q.—(Mr. G. in classical Kannada.) Do you know what Hanuman, the monkey-god did when he landed in Lanka?

A.—(I was rather put out and remained silent. But Mr. G. repeated the question). Lanka was burnt to ashes.

Q.—I believe you have come all the way to Coimbatore to burn other Schools and extinguish all educational activities!

I could no longer stand Mr. G. I told him that I should never have called on him if I had known that I would be given such treatment and that my shadow would never again darken his doors; I pushed back the chair and left the room suddenly. Having been always accustomed to subservient behaviour from schools courting official patronage, he was taken aback greatly and requested Mr. V. S. to call me into the room again. But I had walked out of the compound. Mr. V. S. took leave of Mr. G. and came to me with a sorry face. We got into his neat single bullock cart, an excellent specimen of that variety. He was naturally very sorry at the turn affairs had taken, and he told me that the school would have to be closed if we could not obtain recognition, and recognition was out of the question as Mr. G. had refused to visit the school and told him plainly that he would

make a strong adverse report against it to the Director of Public Instruction. All my staff and the 500 pupils who were reading in the school fully shared these apprehensions. I spent a whole day and night in prayer and tribulation. How to get out of this self-created impasse was a most difficult problem.

THE COLLECTOR

The next day at about 8-30 A.M. I called on Mr. G. D. Leman, I.C.S., the Collector. He was a very good man, had a good memory for faces but found it difficult to remember Indian names. He had a kind heart. Even when he was on leave in England, in writing to one of his favourite Deputy Collectors he expressed himself thus: "I know that Mr. (a Thasildar) is corrupt. But there are no proofs against him. I wish he would retire on pension as soon as his time is up." Such a judicial frame of mind in the executive head of the District administration was a most valuable asset to the public at large. He used always to call me "Headmaster". The purport of my conversation with him on what to me was a most momentous occasion, I give below, L. and S. representing the Collector and myself respectively.

L. What can I do for you? How is the school getting on?

(I explained the trouble I had created for myself.)

L.—I am sorry you are in this plight. But how can I interfere in a purely departmental matter?

S.—The Director of Public Instruction is a member of the Civil Service.

L.—Certainly. I know Mr. Grigg very well.

S.—I have resolved to go to Ootacamund at once and place before him all the facts.

L.—Yes. I wish you success.

S.—I shall feel thankful to you if you give me a mere note of introduction.

L.—Without reference to the attitude of the Inspector of Schools towards your institution?

S.—Yes. You have formed as head of the District administration some opinion about myself and my school. I only desire to avail myself of that opinion in this crisis, independently of any adverse report which the Inspector of Schools may make or might have already made.

L.—I see your point. I have a good opinion of you and I shall be glad to record it.

S.—I shall be fully satisfied with such a favour.

L.—When do you want the letter?

S.—Just now, if you please, I shall be at Ooty tomorrow morning.

L.—All right. I shall be with you soon.

L. went into another room, wrote a long letter, gummed it up and gave it to me. After expressing my gratitude to him, I withdrew, with heartfelt prayers to God. The same day with a colleague of mine I started and reached Ooty the next morning. In those days, we had to travel in a bullock-cart from Mettupalayam, all the night.

MR. H. B. GRIGG

The next day I called on Mr. Grigg. That was the first time I ever saw him. He was a stately personage of dignified deportment, and full of that benevolent autocracy which is the distinguishing feature of most men in high office, wielding independent power and commanding the indulgent ear of Government.

Mr. Grigg, after giving me a patient hearing, and expressing appreciation of all my efforts on behalf of indigenous education, said: "I feel I am placed in a very awkward position. The Inspector of the Division has condemned your school as strongly as possible. The Collector of the District has however certified to the generally favourable opinion which your school commands at Coimbatore. How can I summarily reject the departmental view?"

I replied thus. "I shall propose a compromise. The Inspector of Schools is for permanently excluding me from the list of recognition. I shall stand on my own merits. Let my school be provisionally recognised for this year. If the results compare favourably with those of other institutions, let recognition be continued; if not I shall close the school.

Mr. Grigg: "I cordially agree. That is a fair compromise. You have recognition this year."

I represented that the very next day was the last day for paying the fees into the treasury and the Treasury officer would not receive the money unlesss it was accompanied by the order of recognition. Mr. Grigg,

realising fully the force of my remarks, asked me to go back at once to Coimbatore and promised to wire to me and the authorities concerned, the next morning. I went back and got the telegram the next day and this was regarded then as no small triumph for a struggling school.

AM EXCITING INCIDENT

The next year Mr. G. had been transferred and one Mr. Z had succeeded him. He came to inspect the school and during the inspection the following exciting incident happened.

Among the influential citizens who supported the school was Mr. Kuppuswami Sastriar, a leading District Court pleader. He was a remarkably bold gentleman and one of commanding voice and personality. He was the uncle of Mr. T. R. Ramachandra Iyer, B.A., B.L., one of the leaders of the Madras Bar, who is at present the esteemed President of the Vakils' Association, whose high abilities and great independence have won for him universal esteem and regard. Mr. T. R. Ramachandra Iyer was then studying in the Law class and during the vacation, he had that noble instinct of serving his country even at that age of his; and he cheerfully complied with our request to teach some of the classes, especially in Science. At the time of Z inspecting the school Mr. T. R. R. was teaching a class, probably the 5th Form, Mr. Z put him some impertinent question and had a fitting and well deserved retort.

Mr. Z abruptly came out of the class, and walked out of the school in great temper. One of the students came running to me to the class I was teaching and he exclaimed aloud in Tamil, 'Sir, Mr. T. R. R. has given a sound thrashing to Mr. Z.' I was stunned for a minute and then by cross-examination, found out that the student had put metaphorically the angry conversation between the Inspector of Schools and my esteemed friend. I immediately ran out of the school, apologised to the Inspector for any inconvenience that might have been caused to him and requested him to examine the other classes. He said he had already enough of it, that a school composed of such impudent young men was not worthy of his inspection and he would report against it. He began to walk faster after this pronouncement! I came back. All the teachers met together and congratulated Mr. T. R. R. on his manliness and had a hearty laugh over the whole affair. For we knew Mr. T. R. R. was eminently in the right and it was not his fault that he had to give a reply which exposed the ignorance of the Inspector of Schools!

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Soon after I went again to Ooty. Mr. Grigg, on seeing me had a hearty laugh and exclaimed: "You are now an annual visitor to the Hills! Any trouble about the school this year also?" I explained the above incident, and added that Mr. T. R. R. was a student of the Presidency College and was much liked by Dr. Wilson. I knew that the Presidency College students were generally in the good graces of the higher Government

officers. Mr. Grigg asked me about the past year's results. When I placed before him a comparative statement, he said: "Your results are very good. No difficulty about recognition." From that time till his demise Mr. Grigg was very good to me. I used to call on him at Madras occasionally while he was Director of Public Instruction and then British Resident in Travancore. The "*Hindu*" as the accredited organ of the progressive Indian community and the jealous guardian of its privileges, had to be the medium for ventilation of grievances existing in the Education Department. Mr. Grigg's administration came in for a great deal of adverse comment, generally in the correspondence columns and at times in the editorials. But this attitude of the paper never interfered with our mutual cordiality and not only did he record in writing for my benefit his high appreciation of my efforts as a schoolmaster but retained to the last a feeling of perfect confidence in my personal regard for him. He was always candid and never concealed from me his views regarding the criticisms levelled against him and generally we agreed to differ, after fully discussing the points at issue. Whatever may be the views of those who were serving in the department and whom his policy might have affected, personally I was greatly attached to him and always I recognised in him a warm hearted friend anxious to cheer me up.

MR. A. MONRO

Subsequently Mr. Monro, M.A., B.C.L., came to the Coimbatore Division as Inspector. Having had bitter

experience of two of his immediate predecessors, I forestalled all the other institutions by making his acquaintance on the very day he arrived at the Railway station and by narrating to him in detail my story and requested him to inspect the school the very next day. He spent three hours with me at the school and expressed great gratification. He gave me the special privilege of calling on him during night or day at my convenience. I used to spend long hours with him in the free discusssion of educational topics. Once at Coonoor in the Orange Grove where he had his temporary halt, he showed great solicitude about my health, and gave me paternal advice. On another occasion when I was continuously annoyed by the falling of stones in my house during nights as the result of local animosities, students used to sleep in my house and keep guard over it. Mr. Monro, having heard of it, sent for me, praised me very much and put heart into me. The acquaintance gradually ripened into friendship of a lasting nature as subsequent events would show.

THE DISTRICT JUDGE

On a certain occasion it occurred to me and my colleagues that we must institute the system of annual distribution of prizes to students and make a special endeavour thereby to strengthen our hold on the boys and make a public bid for patronage, as an effective counterpart to all local opposition. Our idea was that the success of our scheme depended mostly on the position and academic status of the President of the

function. Locally the most enlightened scholar was Mr. W. H. Wigram, M.A., I.C.S., the District Judge. He was an examiner for the Madras University. But unfortunately he had just then returned to Coimbatore after convicting as Special Judge the heavy batch of some of the most influential citizens of Salem in the local riots. Among those convicted by him was one of our most beloved citizens. Subsequently he was acquitted by the Madras High Court. He was a graduate pleader of distinction; and by his lifelong devotion to public affairs he was once elected to preside over the deliberations of the National Congress, and in his well-earned retirement to-day, he is commanding the esteem of most of his countrymen in all parts of India—even of those who do not agree with all his views.

Mr. Wigram's name was thus one which caused no small consternation in the minds of the Indian public. Few would dare at that time to approach Mr. Wigram for any favour. But mine was a public duty and it was purely a matter concerning education. I brushed aside all extraneous apprehensions and one morning, called on Mr. Wigram. He was reading a book, lounging in an easy chair, smoking a big cigar. As soon as I was ushered into his room, he lowered down his legs, placed the book and the cigar on a tea-poy near the chair, and each of us made a few preliminary remarks about the weather and the climate. I realised at once from his sprightly countenance, beaming with intelligence and from his look and language that I was in the presence of a very learned man, and one of great determination.

He immediately asked me what the object of my interview was. I told him it was to request him to preside over the anniversary of the school as a means of encouragement to the staff and the students. At once he sprang up in his chair, sat up straight, looked me in the face critically and in a stentorian voice, spoke to the following effect. "That is indeed very fine! You are aware that I am the President of the College Committee. You have done your best to injure the College and the Mission High School. You have in fact disorganised the educational system and now you have the hardihood to ask me to encourage you by presiding over the prize distribution. How dare you do this, Sir?"

I was not at all taken aback. I said "You are a judge, sir, you have as yet heard only one side of the story. Will you please hear me fully and give me your verdict? I shall then cheerfully abide by it."

Mr. Wigram said "Certainly, you can take as much time as you require. Please be brief and plain. Let me have a full statement."

My submission was as follows: "Here is a statement containing the rates of school fees levied by me and the other schools. Here is the statement B, comparing results with those of other institutions. In Coimbatore there was no regular provision for instruction and demonstration in Science and Sanskrit before I started my school. I was the first to introduce both these valuable improvements. A good number of my students are older than myself and had given up their

study in despair years ago. The sons of the local District Munsiff and those of leading lawyers attend my school. One of your own office staff is the Manager of the school. Do all these facts testify to my attempt being a good one or the reverse? It is on the strength of such facts in my favour that I have ventured to approach you with the request I made".

Mr. Wigram immediately changed his mood and tone. He said "You have a strong case. I shall verify the facts you have placed before me and if they are borne out I shall be glad to accede to your request. I shall write to you in a day or two. Meanwhile, please convey my compliments to your Manager who is such a trusted subordinate of mine. Are you satisfied?" I replied I was gratified and after expressing my obligation for his kindness, took leave of him. The very next day, I received a kind note telling me that such and such a day and hour would suit him. We arranged for the distribution of prizes on a showy scale in the then newly constructed Bank buildings, Mr. Wigram made a good speech and the staff and students and friends of the school were indeed very much pleased.

Of all the students that studied under me the most distinguished at present is Sir T. Vijaya Raghavan, M.A., of the London Wembley Exhibition fame and now Vice-President, Council of Agricultural Research. He and his elder brother were studying then. His father Mr. Ramaswamy Iyengar, who retired as sub-Judge of Kumbakonam, was then District Munsiff of Coimbatore.

He encouraged us in many ways and by sending his own children to our school in preference to other older institutions. Mr. C. N. Krishnaswamy Iyer, M.A., L.T., who did such splendid work for the cause of the great co-operative movement in Coimbatore, was another. Mr. Kasturi Iyengar, M.A., was a third. He was a Professor in the Maharajah's College, Mysore and died early in life. If I remember right Mr. T. R. Krishnaswamy Iyer, B.A., B.L., brother of Mr. T. R. Ramachandra Iyer studied there for some months. At this distance of time, I do not remember the names of others. But one striking incident I must narrate here as it shows that the highest reward of a teacher lies in the grateful recollection of the student. About the year 1910, when I was an Assistant to the Revenue Commissioner in Mysore, one day at about 5 o'clock in the evening I was walking from the Bangalore city market towards Doddanna's Hall. A middle aged man with a growing beard and in the garb of a pilgrim, accompanied by a young woman, his wife, was coming in the opposite direction. As soon as he saw me, in the public road, he laid aside his bundle on the ground and in the road dust, prostrated before me and commanded his wife to do the same. I was in great bewilderment at such a sign of respect and was wondering what it meant. My unknown friend after wiping off the dust from his body, asked me whether I had forgotten him. I had to confess with regret that I could not guess who he was. Then he said "How can you forget me, your favourite student? I was studying under you for three

years. I remember what advice you used to give me, long after the school hours, whenever I met you in your walks. If I had listened to you I would have been happy. I neglected your advice and I am in this sorry plight. I entered the Railway service but lost my job. I began business but failed. Then life became a burden and I resolved on pilgrimage and as a vow I began to grow my beard. My wife has willingly agreed to follow me wherever I go. On our way we happened to come here three days ago. All these days, I am enquiring of you to see you. But nobody seems to remember you as a teacher of the Native High School. Your official designation I knew not. So I was in despair and distress and at last, God has enabled me to realise my wish. I simply wanted to unburden my mind."

At such a speech and sight I was moved beyond control. I invited him to go to my house and stay there for a few hours with his wife. But he had purchased his ticket and had promised to join his companions at the Railway Station. I may add he was a high caste Hindu, a Naidu gentleman. Such a confession and such devotion it was rare to come across. I blessed him most heartily, and wished him success in his travels. He would not accept any aid from me; all that he desired was to perform what he thought was a sacred duty to his own self. The grief caused by his neglect of his studies when he was young was so poignant and was weighing with him so heavily, and among all his teachers he had singled me out as one who had

taken some special care of him, and he was yearning to see me and make a confession.

A VALUABLE ACQUAINTANCE

It was in Coimbatore when he came there to practise as a High Court Vakil that I made the acquaintance of Mr. S. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, B.A., B.L. He was a genial friend, the very picture of modesty, talked little and to the point and was generally almost always of a cheerful disposition. We lived very near each other and met often for the discussion of local topics. Few of those who knew him at Coimbatore or subsequently in his earlier career at Madras, could ever have detected in him at that time, signs of that burning ardour for nationalism and straight political progress of the highest order, of which subsequently he was so prominent and so unwearying an advocate. I have therefore often regarded his entry into active journalistic life as purely providential and as one ordained by a higher destiny for the betterment of India's political condition.

As a result of his advent on the scene at a time when such a presence as his was most essential for the uplift of Indian journalism, the *Hindu* emerged from the darkest gloom and developed in a remarkable manner. After my return from Baroda, our respective avocations and distant abodes scarcely brought us together. But during the last years of his life, nobly consecrated to the highest interests of the motherland,

he came to Bangalore twice at short intervals and on both these occasions, the few hours I spent with him, were indeed very happy. We used to survey briefly and rapidly our respective lives, the great public changes, the unachieved national ambitions, the growing obstacles in the way of national movements, and the men and measures most supreme in the public cause, I used to feel then as I have felt on similar occasions, that what in the long run tells in favour of a man, independently of all considerations of wealth and status, is his humble labours on behalf of the public at some period of his life. It was to me a matter of no small gratification that our mutual goodwill and implict confidence in each other, whatever our difference in views on particular subjects, was just the same in the twenties of the present century as in the eighties and nineties of the past. It was in a great measure due to three important factors, (a) our long acquaintance (b) my connection with the *Hindu* of which he was afterwards both the Proprietor and Editor, and (c) my service for a time under his distinguished brother (to whom he was devoutly attached) in a very responsible capacity. I used to feel in his silent and smiling presence and the few words we leisurely exchanged, that hilarity which characterised us in our youth at Coimbatore. We both agreed always on one point, *viz.*, that neither age nor disappointments could ever extinguish in our hearts the inexplicable glow of hope for the future of our country nor make us falter in our inborn and intense faith in lifelong

labour as the sovereign antidote for all human failings and infirmities.

CORRESPONDENT OF THE *HINDU*

At Coimbatore I had to take a leading part in the management of the school and in teaching the various classes. However the innate desire to become the Coimbatore correspondent of the *Hindu* was irresistible. But I had not the personal acquaintance of either the Editor or the Manager and I had not seen Madras itself. The first few occasions when I sent my communication I did not know whether it had reached its destination; but still I persisted and the old maxim of "Try, try, again" was of great help to me. Almost every week I chronicled what I thought to be interesting either by way of news or comment. After some months in one issue (the *Hindu* was then a tri-weekly) I found my "nomde plume" under the heading "declined." I was gratified with the assurance of my writings having at last caught the Editor's eye. After a few weeks, later on, I found to my greater gratification that I had been promoted to a higher rank and came under the category of those whose letters were "declined with thanks" I then pondered over the distinction between these two expressions and came to the conclusion that the first implied a summary rejection on the score of the utter unfitness of the material sent for publication, while the second expression recognised that it came very nearly up to the mark. I still persisted, till at last one fine evening, one of my students ran to

me in breathless haste with a copy of the *Hindu* in his hand and exclaimed aloud, "Sir, Sir, here is a nice paragraph about our school I was not myself, then getting the *Hindu* and when I looked into it I recognised that it was my own production and then it struck me that my preliminary trials were nearly over and at last I was successful in my effort. Subsequently almost every letter of mine regularly appeared and sometimes I began to receive autograph letters from both the Editor and the Manager. At times however my position was very irksome because I had roused the wrath of local officials. But in justice to the European officers of the day, I should mention that I was regarded with great suspicion more by my own countrymen, and very often I was afraid of them more than of the European officers. But I had strong friends among some of the lawyers and the respected local journalist of the day, Narasimhalu Naidu of the Coimbatore *Crescent*. In fact, except the officials whose actions were exposed and some of the higher ministerial officers, the general public were glad of the affairs of the District receiving some publicity. The position of a correspondent exposing regularly official flaws was rather embarrassing, as I also happened to be the actual manager of the High School which had evoked considerable opposition from the older institutions and had to depend for its very existence on the recognition of the Education Department and goodwill of the pupils. But I was fortunate in eliciting the active support of both the Collector and the District Judge—both English Civilians on behalf of

my school, and in having a strong party of my own countrymen to back me up.

THE ERODE NATIVE HIGH SCHOOL

Some of the leading men of Erode made a request to me and my colleagues to extend our activities to that place and open a school there. Mr. C. Rangachariar (brother of Mr. Mudukkutheru Srinivasa Aiyangar, Pleader, Kumbakonam) who rendered us very valuable help in Coimbatore when he was a clerk in the District Court, had been transferred to Erode and was our strong support. He subsequently rose to the position of Sheristadar of the Madras City Civil Court and enjoyed in full the confidence and esteem of the Judges including Dewan Bahadur Pattabhi Rama Aiyar. On his retirement he settled himself at Vannathangarai, Tanjore. He was one of my most warm-hearted friends. The late Mr. Dasappa Iyer, a prominent and influential citizen of Erode, took a leading part in organising the school. Again we sent for a graduate from Kumbakonam, sent few of our teachers from Coimbatore and opened a school at Erode. A Naidu gentleman employed in the Munsif's Court rendered us active assistance. According to our national traditions, the inauguration of the "Vidya Sala" was preceded by a procession and was followed by a substantial dinner. It was a *gala* day.

THE KARAMADAI VILLAGE SCHOOL

Karamadai is a village on the Mettupalayam Road and a Railway Station. Some of the landlords there

requested us to visit the place and make suggestions for improving the local school. We went there and did our humble best to aid them.

AIDED SCHOOLS, THEIR PRECARIOUS CONDITION

Though the school was numerically strong and at last the educational officers also gave it the benefit of the grant-in-aid system, still I was not altogether unconscious of the fact that if I wanted higher pay and better prospects I should look for them elsewhere. Therefore without relaxing my hold on the school and without diminishing my activities on its behalf I was also considering the problem of the future for my own self. But I had to reject some offers and in others I failed.

CAPTAIN A. T. ROLLAND

While at Coimbatore I went to Madras once to see Captain A. T. Rolland, then Deputy Inspector-General of Police. He had worked for several years as Superintendent of Police, Tanjore, and he had tried in all possible ways to help my father because he was convinced of his innocence. He was therefore anxious to assist me and offered me the post of Head-quarter Inspector of Police at some district head-quarters. I said I was too short for the Department. He had a hearty laugh and replied "Leave that to me. Don't you see I am as short as, if not shorter than, you?" I then expressed a doubt as to whether I had all the qualifications necessary for a Police officer. I had seen a great deal of the work of the subordinate Police in the

Tanjore District when my father was a Magistrate. Several Inspectors and sub-Inspectors of Police were acquainted with me, and I often saw personally the way in which they exercised their powers. They were all very good men but I could not approve of the methods they sometimes had to adopt. I had thus cultivated a sort of prejudice though I recognised fully the value of their work and the great difficulties they laboured under in keeping law and order. Captain Rolland understood me fully and said "If you have no confidence in yourself it is best that you do not enter the Department." I cordially subscribed to his view. He then asked me "Why not you try Mysore? I have a friend—very high in the service of the Durbar. I shall give you a very strong note." I thankfully accepted his suggestion. He read the note to me before he gummed it up. His very first sentence was "Presuming upon our acquaintance of eighteen years ago." It struck me then that both Captain Rolland and myself were leaning on a very slender reed.

MY FIRST VISIT TO BANGALORE

However I took the letter and when in train, a fellow passenger, a perfect stranger, entered into kindly conversation with me, and insisted on my accepting his invitation for staying with him the next morning at Bangalore, at least for a few hours, as I was quite new to the place and I had started without making any previous arrangement for boarding and lodging. He was a Smartha Brahmin gentleman of South India, and was employed in one of the mercantile firms at Banga-

lore. He was just then in deep mourning owing to the death of his young wife a fortnight back at Madras. My entreaties to him to excuse me from giving him any trouble at that particularly depressing period of his life made no impression on him. He was in earnest and was anxious to help me and to find in me at least for a few hours a companion who would divert his attention from his sorrow. Since then on numerous occasions I have found that from sources absolutely unexpected and from persons on whom I had not the slightest claim for aid or sympathy, I have often received great assistance while at times, from persons on whom I had the strongest claims I had nothing but dire disappointment! When a number of such incidents, great and small, began to accumulate in the course of several decades, on deep thought I attributed them to the law of Karma, the unseen eternal law of compensation. The divine ethical teaching of the Gita to do everything within one's power without looking for any reward is perhaps the surest road for distressed humanity for attaining contentment and for avoiding all chances of vain regret. The next morning my friend took me to his rented lodging in Nagarthpet, Bangalore City. A peep into the deep well in the house and the taste of the brackish water filled me with despair. Bangalore then seemed to me to be worse than Coimbatore. No amount of eulogy can therefore be considered adequate to the genius of Sir K. Seshadri Iyer and the liberality of the Mysore Durbar for providing a good supply of sweet water to Bangalore subsequently. Nowadays the water taps

often fail us for some hours on a few days. During such occasions when a great clamour is raised by the members of my own family and my neighbours I try to appease them by referring to the suffering of the people in the good old days.

After spending the morning with my friend I moved to a Brahmin Hotel in the afternoon and went on my errand the next morning. When I was about to enter the residence of the officer to whom Captain Rolland had given me a letter, a Daloyet came running and asked me to wait outside as the Saheb was quite averse to see any one entering the compound! He took my card and the letter inside. He turned up again after a full hour and told me that both my card and the letter had been torn to pieces and thrown into the waste paper basket! I must here remark that I generally found Daloyets of Bangalore more polite and far better behaved then their comrades in British India, especially in Madras City. I returned to Coimbatore with the simple satisfaction of having seen Bangalore.

JUSTICE A. RAMACHANDRA IYER

Next year, I believe in 1885, when I happened to see Justice Sir T. Muthuswami Iyer, he asked me whether I had heard of Justice Ramachandra Iyer. This gentleman was one of the leaders of the Madras Bar in his days, was almost one of the first Indian journalists in Madras, was for a time editing a weekly paper in English and was far-famed for his public spirit and forensic abilities. According to public rumour he displayed great courage during the Chingleput scandal

in the public attempt to bring the "Tiger Thasildar" to his senses. When the Travancore Durbar was in need of a capable Chief Justice for the High Court, at the instance probably of Sir Charles Turner, the place was offered to him. Dewan Rama Iyengar's administration was full of excitement and sharp difference of opinion arose between the Dewan and the Chief Justice. If I remember right, it was about this time that my esteemed friend the late Mr. G. Parameswaran Pillay, who was subsequently for a time a magnificent star in the political firmament of Madras, was subjected to persecution at Travancore for his bold criticism even as a student of the Travancore administration. The sympathies of the Chief Justice, from a strictly judicial and equitable point of view, were with the unfortunate students. When thus the feelings between the Executive head and the Judicial head of the administration were strained, Mr. R., the very embodiment of a peaceful disposition, naturally wished for a change. Providentially the choice of the Mysore Durbar which was then in need of a capable Judge for its Chief Court, fell on Mr. R, and he quitted the land of palms and tanks to the land of gold mines and elephants. None among our countrymen has left behind him a longer or more eminent record of service then Mr. R, as a publicist, lawyer, and Judge, all continuously combined in a single career. In the evening of his well-devoted life, he gave himself up mostly to the study and contemplation of those eternal verities of spiritual life which

have had such a fascination and predominant sway over men's minds in India from time immemorial.

I replied to Sir T. M., that I had a great regard for Mr. R. though I had not seen him. He gave me a long letter and asked me to go to Bangalore. This was my second visit. I found in Mr. R., then in the prime of life, a gentleman of accomplished manners. He weighed every word he spoke, was very kind, courteous, and hospitable and took a genuine delight in listening to, and advising younger men who sought his help. I was simply charmed with the reception he offered me; when however he came to the subject-matter of Sir T. Muthuswami Iyer's letter, he told me frankly that it was not possible for him to do anything for me. He explained to me how unpopular the Dewan had become owing to his fancied partiality to "foreigners". He added by way of a decisive and convincing illustration that in his own case, when he had to get a very small start in the Mysore service for a very near relation of his, whose educational qualifications were similar to mine, he thought it necessary to submit the fact personally to the highest and supreme authority in the State for fear that otherwise he would be contributing his own share to the unpopularity of the Dewan. He wished me success in my own sphere. The acquaintance I made then was of no small encouragement to me later on.

DEPUTY INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS

Once Mr. Mouro consulted me whether I would take up the post of Deputy Inspector of Schools. At

that time, the Inspectorate was not open to Indians and I thought the subordinate office was a blind alley which did not lead to the high way. I showed no anxiety to respond to his call.

THE OFFER OF A TALUQ GUMASTAHSHIP

One morning when I went to see the Collector of Coimbatore, he was a member of the famous Stokes family, he was on horse back and was just then getting out of the compound. As soon as he saw me he pulled up the reins, stopped for a few minutes and asked if I did not wish to enter Government service and better my prospects. "I have a vacancy on hand" he said "I would advise you to accept it. I have resolved to appoint only and as far as possible passed candidates as Taluq gumastahs. The Karur Tahsildar has a vacancy and he has recommended an unpassed volunteer. If you are willing to take it up I shall get you the order" I said "I do not think it would suit me." "Why not?" said the Collector. "It is in the Taluqs that you can get excellent grounding and your rise gradually will be sure and certain."

"That may be true" I replied "but at present if the Tahsildar of Karur and myself call on you, you give me a seat and probably the Tahsildar will have to stand and wait outside till my interview is over. You expect me to stand before the Tahsildar and submit papers. Then the pay is only a third or fourth of what I am getting now. I cannot keep body and soul together on Rs. 15 a month, and if I resort to the usual practice of

the ordinary gumastah and take 8 as. or more from each petitioner who resorts to the office, I would be no better than the man I replace. It is best to leave this job to the plodding unpassed or Middle School volunteer who has a house and lands in the Taluq, who has other means of subsistence and who can therefore pull on and add to his local influence and find consolation in serving in the house of the Tahsildar and get the village officials to serve in his house."

The Collector agreed. For my part I admired the Collector's solicitude to improve the Taluq office. I was sure if he had the power to enhance the pay of the staff he would have done so. Within the limits allowed to him, he was anxious to introduce educated men in the interior and thus raise the tone of the Taluq administration.

CHAPTER VII

MOVE TO MADRAS

In 1884 or 1885 the same Mr. H. S. Thomas, as a member of the Board of Revenue was appointed to enquire into the Tanjore Remissions sanctioned by Mr. J. B. Pennington. On the recommendation of Mr. Thomas about 19 officers of the District including Mr. Thillanayakam Pillay, B.A., Deputy Collector, (one of the most honest and straightforward officers of Government) were dismissed from service in complete disregard of the opinion of Mr. J. B. Pennington, I.C.S., the responsible Collector of the District who had won a very good name as a sympathetic administrator, by the Government of Sir. M. E. Grant Duff. It was the Black Quinquennium (a booklet written by Mr. Eardley Norton). Within a short period of five years, administrative scandal after scandal, such as the Chingleput scandal, Salem riots, the Tanjore Remission scandal, the Garstin decoity case, etc., followed in quick succession. My father was one of the officers whose services were so summarily dispensed with, after he had put in a service of 31 years, of which 25 years were eligible for pension. This second official blow interfered seriously with all the prospects of life of both myself and my brothers. My father who had a name for strict integrity and who had no savings, left Tiruturaipundi

for Madras. For many years, he exerted himself a great deal to get back the position of a Tahsildar and strangely enough had even lost without pension, the low place of Sheristadar. At this stage of my existence I had no other go but to abruptly leave Coimbatore to secure work and wages elsewhere. These were the causes which compelled me to start the career of an educationist as an adventure and subsequently to change it.

From my slender income it was not possible to maintain two establishments, one at Madras and one at Coimbatore. The situation called for immediate action. My letters to the few high-placed acquaintances of mine and my father brought me in response a great deal of sympathy with an expression of sincere regret of their inability to do me anything substantial.

INTERVIEW WITH G. SUBRAMANIA IYER

Among others I had appealed to G. Subramania Iyer, and what was my agreeable surprise when I got a telegram from him in March 1886 to meet him at Madras forthwith. We had not seen each other; but G. Subramania Iyer had a habit of occasionally writing to his correspondents and encouraging them by frequent letters. I used to wonder how he found time to keep in touch with such a large number of men throughout the Presidency and even outside. He had early in life thus formed what I may aptly term a journalistic fraternity, composed of writers of news-letters and leading articles throughout South India and in the adjoining States of Mysore, Travancore and

Hyderabad. I could not at that time entertain any strong hopes of being employed by him. I was only an F.A.; Madras was full of graduates in arts and law, belonging to influential families, all anxious to find intellectual work. However my curiosity was very great and I at once went to Madras and called on G. S. He was then living in Veeraraghava Mudali Street, Triplicane, in the house in which later on the Hindu Girls School was first located. According to his custom he had taken a cold water bath in the morning, had put on his caste marks, and with a shirt over his body and a towel as an accompaniment, he was attending to his onerous literary work. When I saw him for the first time and after he spoke for a few minutes, I made out that he was a man of strong determination, that he was one who formed quick decisions, right or wrong, and stuck to them with irresistible pertinacity. He was 'par-excellence' a literary man with a keen sense of his own dignity, and quite averse to spending time in the exchange of meaningless compliments and vague expressions of sentimental sympathy. He straight went to the subject uppermost in his mind.

The purport of his conversation with me, in what to me was a momentous interview, and a strong turning point in my career, I put below in the direct form.

"I sent for you merely to ask you whether you would accept the place of Sub-Editor. We are in urgent need of strengthening our editorial staff. I am disgusted with graduates. Several of them who joined me, made their position a stepping stone for something

better. As you are not a graduate, I thought you might stay with me for some years. Your contributions are up to the mark. Both myself and my colleague, Mr. Veeraraghavachariar, like your younger brother Sreenivasa Rao very much. Though a student, he takes great interest in public movements and contributes occasionally to the *Hindu*. We should be glad to take him, but he has just now failed in the B.A., and perhaps he will study again. At any rate you have more experience and we therefore prefer you. You must promise to stay with us for at least three years. You are quite welcome to stay for five years or longer but you must never think of leaving us for three years. Are you agreeable? That is the first point".

I said yes. Then he proceeded to his next point. "As regards your pay I know what you are drawing at Coimbatore. I shall add to it a Presidency allowance and then give you annually a small increment for five years if your work is satisfactory. We cannot at present offer you any better terms. What do you say."

I simply said "alright". No other course was open to me.

Then he continued "As regards your work I am the sole judge. There is no appeal against my decision if I consider it unsatisfactory".

I replied: "That goes without saying".

Then he said "join the office immediately without going back to Coimbatore." I consented.

Then he continued "You have to start at once to Madura as our special correspondent".

The sensational Garstin dacoity or the Guntamanaickanur Zemindary case had just ended in the acquittal of the accused. The Madras Government without taking its defeat coolly and with good grace resolved to pursue Mr. Crole, I.C.S. The Government suspended Mr. C. and sent Mr. H. S. Thomas to Madura for making a departmental enquiry, in closed doors, about the doings of Mr. Crole. To me to follow Mr. Thomas as a special correspondent *incog* was very unpleasant. Both the Government and the public might regard me as an interested individual, anxious to take vengeance on Mr. Thomas for the great injury he had inflicted on my father. I had not till then acted as a reporter, I did not quite comprehend what a special correspondent was expected to do. The enquiry was purely a departmental and a confidential one. I was therefore in a great dilemma. I gently pointed out to Mr. G. S. the above difficulties. But he brushed them all aside in a few sentences. "I know the special work will be very arduous and will require great tact and discrimination. I do not however attach any importance to your personal feelings of delicacy. We have often to do in this world very unpleasant duties. Judges have at times to sit in trial over their friends and even their own priests. It is because your work is a difficult one that we have resolved to take you permanently in our service. Your confirmation will depend on the way in which you acquit yourself at Madura. I have no special instructions to give you regarding how you should do your work. You have to find out for yourself. I shall

take you to one of our prominent citizens to-morrow morning and get you a strong note of introduction to one of the leading pleaders of Madura, a gentleman of great influence who will be of considerable help to you. Call on me to-morrow morning and prepare yourself to start for Madura to-morrow evening".

It was nearly 10 A.M. Mr. Subramania Iyer left his seat, took leave of me and went inside. I went home with a feeling of astonishment at achieving something so substantial in such a small space of time and at the very first meeting and at the same time with a full consciousness of the difficulties of the situation. In our family council of parents and brothers, we were of only one view, all of us, that we must cheerfully accept whatever came to us in a legitimate way to relieve us of our immediate wants. My brother Sreenivasa Row readily agreed to go to Coimbatore to take up my place in the school and to study for the B.A., in private.

The next day G. S. took me to Mani Iyer as he was popularly called. This was no other than our venerable Doctor Subramania Iyer. An intimate study of his life and my long acquaintance has convinced me that he was one of the finest gems of humanity ever produced by sacred Bharat Varsha. He was a shining example of simple living and high thinking. His broad-minded cosmopolitanism, his good will and regard for all communities, had won for him early in life universal esteem. He was the product of an age when self-effort and initiative were in the ascendant. He soon made his mark at Madura, his native district and took a leading

part in building up the civic life of Madura. The Madura Club and the Madura Municipality owed a great deal to his untiring labours. He subsequently sought a wider sphere of influence and removed his head-quarters to the Presidency town. He was a member of the Legislative Council, and a pillar of strength to all public movements. He was so beloved by the public that no Indian wishing for public recognition considered his circle of acquaintances complete unless it included in it Mani Iyer. Generally, people high and low, took a strong fancy for him and he was regarded as the people's man. He was one of the most inspiring progressive political forces of the time and the *Hindu* and Mani Iyer had the strongest affinity towards each other.

Our first meeting was a very simple one. He spoke a few words and gave me a note of introduction to his cousin who had the same name, who belonged to the same profession and whose physical features were curiously similar to those of his own; a somewhat strange coincidence indeed. He was called *Chinna* (younger) Mani Iyer and he was one of the leaders of the Madura Bar.

SIR T. MUTHUSWAMY IYER'S ADVICE

While returning from Mani Iyer's residence, I called on Sir T. Muthuswami Iyer and informed him of my change of calling. He was rather surprised and said " The Native Press is the last place where I should like to see you. It may not lead you anywhere ".

I said "I have already accepted the offer, it is too late now to think of giving it up".

He rejoined "I thought you came to me to seek my advice before you determined upon it".

I replied "I came merely to seek your kind blessings in my new sphere of work".

He concluded the interview by saying "I see; you have my best wishes for your success. Only always be moderate and careful and study facts first hand".

R. V. SRINIVASA IYER'S APPROBATION

Sir T. Muthuswami Iyer's undisguised disapproval acted on me for a few minutes as a wet blanket. It was most depressing. I required some good tonic to instil a new spirit of buoyancy in me. On my way to the Central Station the same evening, I started a little earlier and went to the Presidency College. Just then Mr. R. V. Srinivasa Iyer, one of our most respected Professors came to the verandah from his class room and extended to me a warm welcome. He had come to Coimbatore on more than one occasion and had seen my school. He was very pleased to hear of my joining the staff of the *Hindu* and said "That is the best thing you could do". I at once hastened to the Railway station with the courage which his enthusiastic and hearty congratulation had inspired me.

CHAPTER VIII

AT MADURA

When I reached Madura I found the atmosphere was one of great panic. People in groups of three and four were whispering to one another in unseen corners. The suspension of so popular a Collector as Mr. Crole and the relentless way in which Government was pursuing him, had spread terror in the minds of all classes. There was hardly one man of local importance, official or non-official, who had not in some way co-operated with the Collector in his multifarious activities. No strong case could be made out against him, without involving a number of local celebrities. I then found out how the enquiry might, if successful, affect even Mani Iyer along with several other leading men prominently connected with Mr. Crole in all his activities for the public good at Madura. Thus the action of the Government had aroused the strongest local opposition. The more the public were opposed to the enquiry, the stronger was the attitude of Government who had resolved on their own course of action. The outcome of such strong, opposing and mutually repellent currents of thought was considerable pressure on the part of local officials on likely witnesses who might implicate Mr. Crole and his favourites and a corresponding degree of reluctance on the part of the public to co-operate

with the Government or yield to their wishes. From such a state of tension, the march is a very easy one to the next stage, *i.e.*, great secrecy on the part of officers and great inquisitiveness on the part of the public to find out what was happening every day within closed doors. Naturally the Police were very busy and the town was in a most perturbed state.

Chinna Mani Iyer was a very gentle soul and full of refinement. He was rather at a loss to decide how to provide me with the necessary facilities for my work. He thought, and I fully agreed with him, that in the then state of the city, no one would be willing to undertake the responsibility of associating himself with the correspondent of a newspaper hostile to the Government and to the Special Commissioner. The following conversation settled our programme. "How are you going to get any information at all" he asked. "The enquiry is a confidential one and the authorities will be soon at you and also at me, if they know you are exposing them. For fear of incurring their displeasure, no one will even talk to you, much less will they take you into their confidence. It is an awful job you have undertaken."

"I fully realise the difficulties and dangers of the situation" I said and asked "Do people meet in the Club and exchange views?"

"No, not at all; few go to the Club now-a-day; even there they never talk to one another. Don't you know most of us are watched? The Special Commissioner and the Collector are very anxious that the pro-

ceedings should be kept strictly confidential and that not a word of what transpires in their offices, not even the names of witnesses, should be known to any one out side".

"What do you do in the evening"?

"Now-a-days I come home direct from Court. 'A few friends, both official and non-official' meet me regularly and we have a friendly chat. This is my drawing room".

"Is there any room adjoining the drawing room"?

"There is a lumber room close by with another door-way".

"Will you have it kindly cleaned and lock it up this side"? I asked. "In the evenings I shall occupy that room before you come home and take notes of what you all talk. I shall of course be unseen by any of you".

"That is a capital idea, only you had better come a quarter of an hour before I return home and leave your room after we all disperse, by the other door".

"What, as regards my lodgings"?

"Better," said Mani Iyer, "that you stay alone in an adjoining bungalow, which is at present vacant. This compound will lead you to it. One of my servants will attend on you and look to your wants".

"I said that would suit me very well".

MY DAILY ROUTINE

The above programme was faithfully carried out. For the first two days, I submitted the manuscripts to C. M.; he kindly went through them; on the third day

he said there was no need for him to see them and he would be content with reading my letters in the *Hindu*. I was a close prisoner in my room. Not even a bird at Madura knew who that mysterious person was that kept the *Hindu* so lively by his tri-weekly letters. Mr. H. S. Thomas roared loud in his office room. "The very walls have ears". Lo! the very Heavens threatened to come down. The whole army of officers, of all grades, were everywhere seeking information about the identity of the mischievous individual who dared to invade the sanctity of the momentous enquiry. Some acted merely on the spur of the moment, without any ulterior motive. Others saw in it an excellent opportunity for ingratiating themselves in the favour of their superiors. What more precious and valuable service can ever be hit upon than satisfying the anxious queries of high officers and placing them on the right track? C. M. and myself were immensely enjoying the situation. But this happy state of things was not to continue long. One Sunday, C. M. insisted on my going with him for a drive in the evening. He said, "You have never for once gone out of this compound. You have not seen Madura town. A little fresh air and light will do you good. On Sundays, friends do not regularly come. There is no enquiry today. There is no information to be sought after."

I did not quite agree to the proposal, for I knew that when one violates the precautions on which he is acting, specially in such exciting times, he may be courting some unexpected disaster. But the reverence

I had for my distinguished host who had proved such a tower of strength to me made any other alternative but obedience to his wishes unthinkable. The evening came. At about 5-30 I slowly glided unobserved from my bungalow and got into the coach. C. M. sat in the seat of honour. Two seats, one by his side and one by mine, were vacant. Just before the carriage started, two of the most intimate friends of C. M., one an official of somewhat advanced age, very near his retirement, a very fine figure to look at, and another a lawyer, suddenly strayed into the bungalow and came near the carriage. C. M. was bound by the most ordinary conventions of friendship and courtesy, to invite them to join in the drive. He offered them a warm welcome and they got into the carriage. Then began the whole trouble. My official companion, whom I had never seen in all my life, closely scrutinised my features from head to foot and suddenly sprang from his seat and jumped out of the carriage. C. M. and myself thought that some reptile like a scorpion had stung him from below the carriage cushion. The amiable host was in great confusion. "What has happened? Why have you got down"? he exclaimed in great agony. The other composed himself a little and feeling himself out of the danger zone, replied: "Who is this young man in the coach? I am afraid he is the correspondent of the *Hindu*. If I am seen driving with him, I am sure to lose my appointment and pension. I have only a short time for retirement"! C. M. burst into a loud laughter and tried his best to convince his timid

friend that I was only a schoolmaster, on a few days' visit, and that I was leaving the place the next day. But no amount of assurance would satisfy the official mind. The lawyer also got down. I found myself then in a very awkward position. I at once got down from the carriage and said: "Gentlemen, I do not want to inconvenience you. I shall take a walk which I need most. You go on a drive." I walked fast to my lonely bungalow. The other two gentlemen got into the carriage, were indeed happy and never again said a word on this subject. Our host was eminently pleased; my instantaneous self-effacement gratified him immensely. I laughed singly over the shrewdness of my unknown friend who, by mere instinct, had so accurately spotted me out. What made him so alert, I can never explain. There was absolutely no basis for his suspicion but the fact that I was a stranger to Madura. But he was completely within the four corners of his superiors' instructions. They had ordered him on pain of dismissal not to talk or walk or drive with a stranger. Every day he and his fellow officials were being questioned as to how, what transpired in the office, so soon found its way to so atrocious a journal like the *Hindu*. When he found a stranger, he concluded at once that he was violating the orders he had received and made a clean breast of his suspicion. A strong believer in destiny, I concluded that no human being was justified in thinking that things done under the cover of secrecy would remain secret for ever.

During the night, C. M. sent for me after supper and said "I am sorry I ever requested you to get out for a drive. Now my difficulty is how to disturb you. The two friends who had come here this evening, though they were happy after you left us, yet entertain their own suspicions. I assured them that you were leaving the place to-morrow. If they got scent of your remaining in the adjoining bungalow, they would make much of their discovery".

I asked him whether there was a good Brahmin Hotel in the vicinity and whether he can direct the Manager to give me a room for myself and look after me without giving admission to any one in my room. He replied it could be easily arranged. I removed to the Hotel all my luggage at night at about 10. My host felt completely relieved and was very glad. We used to meet at night and exchange views.

THE PRICE OF GREATNESS

One evening Mr. Ramasubba Iyer, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakil of Madura, (who was then living in his bungalow near C. M.'s) who subsequently became a member of the Legislative Council, sent for me. He was a very good man, an able lawyer and very popular. I believe he was also related to Mani Iyer. He said "You see one of my clients, the Zemindar of who is here now, is in a state of awful depression. Poor man, he does not know what to do. He was a good friend of Mr. Crole. Considerable pressure is being brought to bear on him to depose against Mr.

Crole. But he is dead against it. He has not, however, the courage of his convictions. In fact, no one of his position can ever claim anything of that precious commodity. What do you propose to do to get him out of the pitiable plight he is in." I very mildly asked him "Will you take me to the Zemindar and get me an interview?" The eminent vakil was at once put out. "You disbelieve me." He queried in a stern voice. "Not at all," I said, "Pray do not misunderstand me. I cannot commit my paper in such an important matter on what after all his hearsay evidence. I must be fully satisfied as to what the Zemindar honestly and conscientiously feels in the matter. I can never take it second hand. I am answerable to my employers and the public. I have to take a risk and how can I do it unless I am fully convinced in the matter?"

Mr. Ramasubba Iyer then understood me. He asked me to go to him at night at about 9 after supper. I kept up the engagement. He had a nice brougham and a fine pair of horses. It was a moonlight night. He put me into the carriage, locked both the doors, directed the coachman to sit behind, himself got into the driver's seat and drove the pair of horses with great pride. As he entered the Zemindar's residence, the Zemindar was very happy, because he was so anxious to see his counsel and to pour out his misgivings and to secure his help and advice to get out of the dilemma in which he found himself. *R.* invited him for a moonlight drive, offered him a seat on the coach box along with him and drove him slowly, all the way putting him leading ques-

tions and eliciting hearty answers. It was merely opening the heart of *Z*, his well-founded apprehensions, the various methods in which he was coerced and the inconveniences and dangers ahead if he were to break away courageously. He did not know what to do. Loyalty to the former Collector became incompatible with loyalty to his successor and his official father, the Hon'ble Member of the Board of Revenue. Hard times indeed. I thought then that even hereditary wealth and greatness had their own dangers and were no unmixed good. We reached *R's* Bungalow. *R.* took *Z*, by the hand, conducted him inside and leaving him in the drawing room, came to the coach, unlocked it and after a hearty shake of the hands and the body, gave me leave. Next day I made use of the information I had thus collected. When the paper containing this particular episode reached Madura, it produced a great sensation. The official hierarchy lost courage and gave up the game of going after the Zemindar. The latter saw his opportunity, mustered enough of courage to leave Madura at once for his estate and thus escape the painful duty of uttering anything against Mr. Crole.

THE CESSATION OF THE ENQUIRY

Shortly after, the Madras Government found out they were simply ploughing the sea sand without benefit to any one, recalled Mr. Thomas, cancelled the suspension of Mr. Crole and posted him as District Judge of North Arcot. Evidently the Government treated the Judicial Department as a place of punishment for those who incur their displeasure.

Thus my maiden effort at journalism as a Special Correspondent was crowned with success. Just before leaving Madura, I went to the Club to get a site of the building. I found there the Headquarter Inspector of Police, a very estimable gentleman, who had made my acquaintance at Coimbatore in the house of Mr. Bashyakarlu Naidu, the respected District Munsif. There was also then living Mr. Venkatavarada Rao, a prominent landlord and contractor who belonged to a high family, and who was related to me. These two gentlemen were astonished to find me at Madura, without any intimation to them. I asked the Headquarter Inspector how he was getting on. He sighed a sigh of relief at the abrupt cessation of the special enquiry, told me how fully he and his comrades had been engaged, and asked me who the special correspondent of the *Hindu* was. He said it was the one point in which he had failed to give satisfaction to his superiors. Both my friends insisted on my staying with them a day, but I excused myself and left Madura at once. I have not had occasion to go again to that historic city.

CHAPTER IX

AT MADRAS

When I returned to Madras, Mr. G. Subramania Iyer told me I had earned my confirmation, took me to the Cosmopolitan Club, then regarded as the rendezvous of all political disaffection, and introduced me as the special correspondent. The leading lawyers and other eminent members showered on me their hearty congratulations. I then once for all settled down at Madras for steady work in the office. I found that office work was different from outdoor work. I was not aware of the routine. So on the first day I was sitting quiet in my room, awaiting the arrival of the Editor for putting me in the way. There was then an attender by name Narayanaswamy. He was a good fellow, but always a little impertinent. He came to me and said, "Why are you sitting idle? Here is a tray of old newspapers. Here is a pair of scissors and a gum bottle. Please make your selections and paste them on bits of paper. I shall take them to the compositors. That is your work." I silenced him with a wave of the hand. Very soon he learnt to obey me and I began to like him. Mr. G. Subramania entered my room and said "I have no special instructions to give you. You have to attend to all branches of work as they are sent to you. If the Manager is absent, please look to his work also. As you

do the work, you will understand the details; of course both myself and Mr. M. Veeraraghava Chari will be in constant touch with you and you need have no misgivings." After a few days he told me that my editorial paragraphs and extracts were very good, and I might attempt writing leading articles under his guidance. After several months, he sent for me one day and told me that thenceforward he might leave me in full charge of the office whenever it was necessary for him to go out of Madras. The incident which was the immediate cause of such a favourable view was the following. The Calcutta *Statesman* had published 12 columns of judgment in a sensational Calcutta case. I had summarised the whole of the 12 columns in $2\frac{1}{2}$ columns as a leading article. At the Club some of the prominent young lawyers of Mylapore congratulated Mr. G. Subramania Iyer on this summary and added, "It is surely the work of some senior lawyer who had devoted a great deal of attention to the law." Mr. G. Subramania Iyer simply smiled at the guess and communicated it to me with his own commendations.

AN ACCIDENTAL MEETING

I hired a house in Vellala Street, Purasawalkam, opposite to the late Mr. Velu Pillai's residence. It was a spacious one, and I was the sole occupant. I liked the environments, in spite of the difficulty of locomotion and the scarcity of jutkas after 10 A.M. The walk from Vellala Street to Mount Road, in the hot summer, when

I left home a little late in the mornings, was wearisome.

One day when I was walking fast in such a sorry plight, full of anxiety because it was very late, near the Komaleeswaranpet bridge, underneath the shade of the trees, a huge well-built figure, dressed in a 'mundu' and shirt, was enjoying the breeze, and standing across in the road, obstructed my progress, by stretching across both hands in front of me. On coming near, I recognised the gentleman in front of me as the Headquarter Inspector of Police of Madura. "Where are you going in this hot sun and at such a speed in this hour of the day"? was the question put to me. I said I was going to the *Hindu* Office. "What have you to do there? You have not gone to your work at Coimbatore" was the next query. I confessed I was no longer at that place, and I was a member of the editorial staff of the *Hindu*.

My friend, half in anger and half in jovial temper, exclaimed "You deceived us all at Madura. I now see it clearly. You were the Special Correspondent under your former guise of schoolmaster. How I wish I had found you out then." I begged him not to detain me further and hurried to the office. It then struck me that I made a mistake in refusing the offer of Captain Rolland, and I was bound to have got on as well in the Police Department as in any other. The fundamental qualities necessary for all departments are the same. It is our own apprehensions, likes and dislikes and a disinclination to adapt ourselves fully to the exigencies

of the situation that make us unfit for certain avocations. At times the journalist, the C. I. D. and the lawyer, are all convertible terms. They all watch, expose, expostulate, defend and start prosecutions and persecutions direct or indirect. At times they are also the saviours of the oppressed and come to their relief.

MR. A. O. HUME AND THE CONGRESS

The Indian National Congress destined by God to play its part in the Indian political horizon was born in Bombay in December, 1885. Mr. A. O. Hume, whose name is indelibly inscribed in all patriotic Indian hearts, was popularly called "Father of the Congress." In my humble view, during the first few years, till this prodigious infant of the great National awakening, learnt to stand on its own legs, Mr. Hume was the father, the mother and the wet nurse, all combined in a single far-sighted English soul. Justice Mahadeo Govind Ranade, Dr. Subramania Iyer, W. C. Bonnerjee, Rai Bahadur Anandacharlu, Salem Ramaswamy Mudaliar and other Indians were rocking the cradle of the Congress with sympathy.

Mr. Hume took the leading part in the Congress and spent an appreciable part of his time and money in the annual pilgrimage to the place where the Congress was held, all the way from distant England. Mr. Hume and the Congress were synonymous terms.

The Civil Service which has courted such strong condemnation at various times from many of our eminent leaders and especially from Mr. V. P. Madhava

Rao, C.I.E., the Dewan of the three premier Hindu States successively, claims Mr. Hume as one of its most distinguished members. The question was at times raised whether a Service, a member of which founded the Congress, deserves at our hands such a sweeping condemnation. On the other side it has been contended that one sparrow does not make a summer. Mr. Hume was only an exception which proves the rule. Anyhow the fact is there.

THE FIRST CALCUTTA CONGRESS

Both Messrs. G. Subramania Iyer and M. Veeraraghava Chariar, however much they differed in their views on occasions, were of one mind in regard to the great importance of the Congress. They would never miss the annual gathering and its proceedings which at times were in a sarcastic spirit called "the three days' wonder." In 1886 the Congress was held at Calcutta. Both Mr. G. Subramania Iyer and Mr. M. Veeraraghava Chariar started in time for a fairly long tour in Northern India. Mr. G. Subramania Iyer told me that I should look to the work of all the three during their absence and left Madras with that exuberance of heart and that enthusiastic anticipation of bright events which the prospect of the Congress invariably produces in vigorous minds.

THE PARK FIRE

To me it was a period of great trial. I had hardly been 8 months in the office. Even several of the leading contributors were away from their respective

stations. But there is nothing in this world like calm resignation and steady effort and work. That overcomes all obstacles and leads to success. While I was thus girding up my loins and in the true Biblical spirit attempting to do what little fell to my lot with all the might I could command, the Park Fair Committee was having a jolly good time. The enclosures were full of amusements and large numbers of people, of all creeds and conditions of life were flocking in the evenings to see the fun generously provided for them by the Committee. I daily received invitations but the pressure of work in the office and my natural aversion to going in the crowd prevented me from visiting the Fair even on a single day. On the last day, some of the members of the Committee, who were friendly with me, protested against my indifference. In their view nothing but the Editor's personal visit would be a fitting recognition of their devoted labours and all the trouble they had willingly and cheerfully borne to make the show such a startling success. I yielded to their persuasion. On that fateful day, the last day of the last week of the last month of the year 1886, the 31st of December, if my memory guides me right, I walked from Mount Road to the Park, leaving instructions at home with one of my brothers, Vyasa Rao, then a young student, to take all the members of my family, to the Park, direct from the Vellala Street.

HOW THE CONFLAGRATION AROSE

I entered the main pavilion, walked round the booths, peeped into some of them, and then went to the

centre—an open space, which gave a good view of all the booths. In the dusk of the evening, as I was looking at the main gate, I saw a man with a long torch, lifting up the fire. I thought he was lighting the lamps. But alas no. Either by oversight or wantonness as he was a maniac, Heaven alone knows what the truth was—the torch was applied to the archway, full of inflamable materials. In a second or two, the man disappeared in the crowd, the fire spread with alarming rapidity all round. Men, women and children, without looking at the fire above their heads, were madly rushing in and out. In a few minutes the beautiful and vast Park was converted into a veritable cremation ground. The pity of it was that vast numbers of people were burnt to death or injured seriously. The mystery of it lay in the most mournful fact, that while the people inside the enclosure were madly rushing out of the comparatively narrow gateway, quite unconcerned about the burning flames over their very heads, people outside the enclosure without avoiding the death spot, rushed in. It was all a fearful panic, and no one had the calmness of mind to see what he was doing. I was myself overpowered by the panic around me and slowly walked to the main gate watching the burning flames. The crowds at the gate from opposing sides were pressing so forcibly that it seemed to me, apart from the danger from the fire, men might be crushed to death if they only lost their foot or tumbled over the fallen bamboo rafters obstructing ingress and egress. At this moment a horrible sight unnerved me. An acquaintance of mine, a B.A., B.L., a young man

in robust health, very fair to look at—I believe he was the son of a Tahsildar in the Tanjore District, who had subsequently settled at Madras, went before me pushing the crowd with all his force. At one spot he was obstructed; before he got over it, the flames fell on his shoulders and on his thin dress; coat and 'dhotie' and everything caught fire and he had to be carried out in a precarious condition and in indiscribable agony. A fair, tall, well-built man! What a sudden and sorry fate.

STORY OF MY ESCAPE

I walked back to the central open space. It occurred to me that if all of us only stood in the centre, the fire would have burnt out and no human being would have been affected. It is all very easy—I admit—so long after the event—to sit in the salubrious corner of Bangalore and to make comments. But at the time the stoutest hearts would have failed. We have to fall back again on our favourite theory of *Karma* and predestination and in the official phraseology, call it I suppose, the "Act of God". While thus I was retracing my steps to the centre, a high caste Hindu lady of middle age, with a child in her arms, with two children of 5 and 7, in her hands, on foot, was walking past me and turning to me said in homely Tamil, "Why are you standing here? Follow me and I will show you a very easy passage". I had not seen the lady prior to that day and I have not seen her since. I was struck with astonishment at her familiar invitation and at once as a child would follow its mother, I followed her; in a few seconds she led me

to a temporary fence, away from all thatched sheds, and I was out of the fire again. She walked away straight with her precious charges, without again caring to look at me. My heart was too heavy then. I merely concluded it was all due to God's grace and the lady was merely a beneficient instrument at His hands. I lost my way and walked along the fields. I went a few steps in advance and then came back to look at the flames and to hear the harrowing cries of agony of the injured souls; while thus I was oscillating between moving for—wards and backwards, it suddenly came to my mind that I had asked my brother to take members of the family to the Park. What had become of them? Were they within the park? Were they caught in the flames? Had they returned home safe? Suppose I went home and found the door locked, what was the conclusion? What should I do? Again go in search of them. It was already past 10. I knew on that night, if people did not go home or were not seen by 9 P.M. they were numbered among the dead, or those removed to the General Hospital. This newborn fear took me back to the scene of the accident. But the heat of the flames and the order of the rescue parties and the sight of human suffering, made it impossible for me to approach the dead or the suffering, and identify them. So I resolved once for all trusting in God, to go home, prepared for any fate. When I reached the Doveton College square, it was 11-30. It was moon-light. From my house 3 or 4 search parties had started in different roads. Their consternation at not finding me till such a late hour

with their knowledge of my habits, and with their conviction that in the evenings, I went home straight every day, was inexpressible and they had more than a suspicion that I had fallen a prey to the fire. When in such a state of mind, my friend Rangachariar and my brother Srinivasa Rao, made me out from a distance, a loud shriek went forth from both of them and they ran weeping aloud and embraced me to see whether I had not been injured. We all wept and cried aloud without being able to talk. Then, when I went home, the scene was repeated by the other members of the family. When we had our cold supper it was 1 o'clock. Then my full conciousness came back. I said to myself, "What about the family of G. Subramania Iyer and M. Veeraraghavachariar"?

At that hour of the night, I walked to Triplicane, disturbed the immates, found them all safe, and wired the news to Calcutta. I asked my brother Vyasa Rao whether he had gone to the Park. He explained to me that he took all my people, but insisted on their leaving back for the house in a few minutes. He had left the Park long before the fire commenced. That day it was his insistence that had saved him and other members of the family. I returned home from Triplicane at 4 o'clock in the morning, and at 7 A.M. I went to the office. There was then a most devoted peon by name Arumugam. He was a man of untiring energy. He would work in the office, would work in the house of Messrs. G. Subramania and M. Veeraraghavachariar, and also in mine, and was always ready for work, day or night. It was

a Sunday. I had the office opened, sent for the compositors, and wrote out matter for a Special Supplement. When I was going through the final form, I felt very uneasy in mind. I had a doubt whether all that I had written was sound and whether there was no room for correction or improvement. There was none in Madras whom I knew that I could consult. It is not every educated or cultured man that can be expected to revise a leading article. I remembered an old journalist in the person of Justice A. Ramachandra Iyer who had come from Bangalore for the holidays and was staying in the Cosmopolitan Club. I hastened to him, disturbed him from his rest, and had the benefit of his advice and correction. The acquaintance I had made a year previous, was of excellent service to me in my difficulty. He made only a few corrections, and his approval gave me a strength of mind which cheered me up a good deal. All doubts had vanished. A further duty had been discharged as well as circumstances could permit one to do. Nothing satisfies one's conscience so much as the consciousness of work amidst obstacles. When Mr. G. Subramania Iyer returned from his tour, he remarked that the paper was getting on well and he did not find any difference between the period he was in office and the one during which he was abroad. The confidence and esteem of one's superiors in office is worth more than all the pay one gets.

P. RANGIAH NAIDU

One of the earliest, the longest and the staunchest friends of the *Hindu* of those days was Mr. P.

Rangiah Naidu. Not a single day would pass without this striking personality, with his shining caste marks, white long coat and old fashioned turban calling at 100, Mount Road. In age, temperament and in fact in everything which generally forms the usual basis of comradeship, there was not much common between G. Subramania Iyer, M. Veeraraghavachariar and P. Rangiah Naidu. But their friendship was of the most enduring kind. Rangiah Naidu was most interested in the success of the *Hindu* and all public movements advocated by it. There is no bond of fellowship stronger than that created by a genuine, involuntary and inborn interest in public welfare. This common bond was of the strongest type between these three souls in the meridian of their noble lives. Rangiah Naidu's patriotism was intense and his sense of racial equality was keen. God fearing, conservative in social tendencies, R. was an excellent specimen of the times he lived in and he was always ready to bear cheerfully and courageously his share of heavy sacrifices for the national cause. His admiration for renowned leaders like A, O. Hume and W. C. Bonnerjee, was genuine and that kept him up in his practical work. In those days constancy in political fellowship was considered a great virtue. I am afraid now-a-days, it is at times considered a great weakness, if not a positive drawback.

Once I happened to be the unconscious cause of R. cutting a sorry figure in a public assembly. He was a member of the Madras Legislative Council. He generally prepared his own notes, spoke with great

vehemence and did not court extraneous help. One day, however, he departed from this golden rule. He used to like me immensely and would spare some minutes for a chat with me. Once he had to tackle a somewhat complicated subject in the Legislative Council and spent an hour with me in discussing the various aspects of the same. Then he requested me to prepare the outlines of a good speech which he would improve upon as suited his taste. He proposed to call again on his way to the Council Chamber and take the Notes. In all diligence, I did what I could—finished a somewhat bulky manuscript, so as to give it a respectable appearance. He came back and took it. I warned him that my hand-writing was had, in fact, in the entire *Hindu* office one Kolandavelu Mudaliar, was the only person on whom I fully relied for setting up my urgent copies. I implored R. to read through the Manuscript in my presence, to make his own alterations and to have the whole copied out fair. But no. He said it was all right. He was acquainted with my hand-writing fully, he would make use of my notes only sparingly and to the extent needed. The personal discussion we had, was fresh in his mind. So saying, he put the bundle in his capacious side pocket, drove to the Council Chamber, and there, when his turn came, pulled it out. After he had spoken for a few seconds, he, to his dismay, found it a hopeless task to make out almost every alternate word. In disgust he passed over a few pages, then read out and it was incoherent. There was no connection between one sentence and another. The Council suddenly burst out with a

hearty laughter. Rangiah Naidu, not baffled, threw aside the manuscript, spoke well a few sentences, made up somehow and sat down. The Reporter ran to the office in the evening and asked me what the cause of this unhappy breakdown was. I remained silent. He added by way of a merry comment, that many members of the Council, both Indian and European, had told him that some designing individual had either played a cruel, practical joke on R. or had purposely sold him out. G. Subramania Iyer, M. Veeraraghavachariar and myself laughed over the incident. R. came to the office the next day, fully exonerated me from all blame, admitted that it was all due to his haste and his disregard of my entreaty to him.

RAI BAHADUR P. ANANDACHARLU

Another staunch friend of the *Hindu* was Rai Bahadur P. Anandacharlu. Through incessant struggles and personal merit of a high order, this gentleman had worked his way up almost to the front ranks of the Madras Bar and had acquired a lasting name for robust political independence. He had a good number of friends both among Indians and Englishmen and was a famous writer in his day. The Madras Mahajana Sabha owed a great deal of its reputation to his strenuous literary labours. Those were days of memorials and petitions. Mr. Anandacharlu was the one unfailing source of inspiration of all drafts of memorials and representations. He took a keen delight in the every day success of the *Hindu* and his adherence to the Congress was

of the most convinced type. He was a voracious reader of English novels and at the end of his life had developed a literary style of his own, which was ununderstandable by the ordinary run of humanity. He was very hospitable and often European Members of Parliament, Temperance Reformers from England and austere Christian Missionaries took their lodgings in his beautiful mansion, "Lake View" in Poonamallee Road, Purasawalkam.

THE MADRAS CONGRESS

The year 1887 was one of extraordinary significance for the Madras Presidency. It was the first year in which the great National gathering was held in the metropolis of South India. All the different political, social and religious units joined in harmonious cordiality. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, the veteran statesman, who along with his famous contemporary Sir Salar Jung, had established the fitness of Indians to administer large bits of territory and whose ability had been acknowledged in the House of Commons by distinguished members like Mr. Fawcett, assented to lend the weight of his name to the Reception Committee which included the lion of the Madras Bar, Mr. E. Norton and sedate politicians and orators. It was sight to see the young and the old, the spirited and the timid, the lawyer, the merchant, the journalist and the retired officer, all assembling together for discussing the arrangements in connection with the Congress. At times feelings ran high in Committee meetings. The

bitter sarcasm of Mr. Norton against all titled sychophants, against all Rai Bahadurs, C.I.Es., Rajas and Knights is still resounding in my ears. The bravest hearts used to tremble at the fiery eloquence of Norton. Most of us were too insignificant and wholly powerless to represent the other side or even make a pretence of standing up to speak after him. There was however, then one member of the Committee who had carved out a high name for himself. Salem Ramaswamy Mudaliàr was an M.A., B.L. He had resigned his appointment of District Munsiff for the larger and more independent calling of a High Court Vakil; had rendered memorable public services to the whole of the Indian Continent and had won an undying fame by going on a deputation to England to plead the cause of India, in company with Narayan Ganesh Chandawarkar (subsequently Sir) of Bombay and that distinguished Bengali orator Lal Mohun Ghose. Ramaswami Mudaliar often stood up in committee meetings after Norton had finished and in his own inimitable, modest and forceful periods gave vent to the opposite side of the case whenever necessary. He pleaded with warmth the cause of the absent members who had come in for severe castigation at the hands of his gifted comrade in the legal profession, without causing the slightest offence to Norton. Ramaswamy Mudaliar spoke with wit and humour and Norton was often struck with Mudaliar's persuasive and peaceful contradictions.

The Congress of 1887 was in the good graces of Government. One of the leading and most renowned

Indian Princes of South India had subscribed a thousand rupees and it was acknowledged in the official Congress Report. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao the distinguished statesman as the President of the Reception Committee described the Congress as "a crown of glory to the British Government." Exalted officials like the Hon'ble Justice Sir T. M. Iyer willingly subscribed their mite as a genuine mark of their sympathy with high political aims. Badruddin Tyabji, the eminent Mahomedan Barrister, who was the first to proclaim in all political far sightedness that he was an Indian first and a Mahomedan afterwards, shed a brilliant lustre on the Congress proceedings and the deliberations.

His Excellency the Governor invited the distinguished citizens who had come from all parts of India to a garden party. There it ended. The very next day Lord Dufferin's philippics pronounced against the Congress, reached Madras. From that hour practically, the Congress and the Government parted company.

RAJAH SIR T. MADHAVA RAO

In about November 1887 I had gone to the Central Station, Madras, one evening expecting a friend. That day the passenger train was an hour late. What was my surprise a little later to find no less a personage than Raja Sir. T. Madhava Rao in a similar predicament. He at once recognised in me a fellow member of the Congress Committee and a member of the *Hindu* staff, and entered into a long conversation with me. It

was to me a source of immense gratification and delight to hear so gifted an authority hold forth eloquently, especially on topics relating to Baroda and Travancore and his numerous acts of beneficience.

THE B.A. DEGREE

The year 1887, the year of the Congress, was also the year in which I, along with the multifarious work of the committees and the office, took it into my head to try a chance in the Language Branch of the B.A. From the moment I stepped into *The Hindu* office in April 1886, in all letters addressed to me, personal or official by friends or strangers, I invariably found the two mystic letters B.A., attached to my name. It struck me then that in the public mind no one who had not qualified himself to that level had any right to be there. I was weary of contradicting a distinction for which I had no claim. It seemed to me that the best course was to try a chance to acquire it. I applied to the Senate, for permission to appear in private. It was readily granted. The office gave me leave for 15 days for preparation. The new B.A. curriculum added a great deal to all the subjects, while giving the students the valuable privilege of passing the Examination in branches. A great deal of old English and dry grammar had to be mechanically gone through. Somehow I passed it and resolved to take a long rest till I mastered History and Political Economy—weighty subjects—with a lot of threatening volumes—the only subject left for private study.

SIR T. MUTHUSWAMI AIYAR

Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar had a lasting name for absolute non-interference and for attaining a height of judicial isolation rare in the lives of his compeers in office. I was therefore struck at times with grateful astonishment by instances of his abiding interest in men of whose integrity and hard lot he was convinced and his helping them in the way he thought fit, even at the risk of being construed as going out of the way. He never felt any chagrin if his recommendations proved abortive.

In the year 1863 he recorded his favourable opinion of my father as his official superior. In 1883, 20 years later, when he heard of his degradation to the post of Taluk Sheristedar, he patiently went through all his papers and recorded another certificate on his behalf and after stating his reasons, ended it thus: "I should therefore be glad to see you again rise in the service. You may use this letter if it will do you good". The very next year, on the 31st March, 1884, he gave him a very long letter to Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, Dewan of Mysore, and asked him to go and see the latter. In that letter after referring to the Norton incident which I have already quoted, Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar recorded his opinion with remarkable courage and startling candour in the following weighty words: "Krishna Rao is a self-made man but he is not fortunate. He had been Tahsildar of Puttukotta in Tanjore. Mr. Thomas degraded him to his present post of Taluk Sheristadar not for any real fault of his, but in defence of his policy

against the Brahmins. Several Deputy Collectors and the present Acting Collector desired to help him but the Government would not re-consider its first order." My father went to Mysore but could not get an interview with the Dewan. His favourite Chief Secretary, Mr. Vijendra Rao, who had a lot of relatives in the Tanjore District and who had heard of my father's career, received him kindly, took the letter addressed to the Dewan for submission to him and on the very next day told my father that nothing could be done.

My brother Srinivasa Rao passed the B.A., in 1887, came back to Madras and soon after joined the Board of Revenue. It was in those days a remarkable feat for a graduate to get a clerk's place on Rs. 25 in any Government Office. It invariably presupposed a lot of influence with one of the Secretaries to the Board of Revenue, if not a Member himself. The unemployment question with the best of educated Indians has always been a perennial one, never to be solved. I remember how often I tried my best to get the intercession of men like Dewan Bahadur Rajarathna Mudaliar and Sir T. M. Iyer to get in course of time my brother a small promotion but without avail. Once when I approached Sir T. M. Iyer, he gave me a bit of his mind and it was a great eye-opener. I represented to him that one of the European Members of the Board, a real Nawab of Macaulay's description, a gentleman of pronounced pro-Indian tendencies, was a great friend of the Judge. The Judge had a genuine liking for my brother. So I mentioned the request. He warmed himself up and said "It

is all-right. I quite see your point. But in all confidence, I have to decline to grant your request. The other day, while I was walking through the Beach, as usual, I met my friend. After mutual salutations, we stopped a second or two to exchange views. He told me that a great change for the worse had come over the younger generation of Indians. They either did not care to salute him, or if they did, they did it with such indifference that it looked more an insult". It was a strange revelation to me. The revered Judge continued "You see, why should this high-placed European friend, communicate this especially to me ? I have a suspicion that his remark is aimed at me. He thinks I have not been sufficiently deferential to him. When I am in such a frame of mind, you do not expect me to approach him with any request". I did not know what to reply, I tried my best to argue the point, I pointed out that the exalted position of my host, his innate courtesy and inborn humility were so widely acknowledged, that the European friend could never have aimed his remark against such an august personality and it would never fit in with facts or suspicions. But no amount of argument on my part could convince Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar. He was firm in his inference. I never again talked to him about the matter. On my way home, I pondered over the subject. It struck me that Sir T. M. Iyer could not stand any aspersions against any one. If they were made, his first suspicion was whether they were aimed at him. If not why should he be made the medium of communication in such unpleasant matters.

1894 CONGRESS

During the 1894 Congress held in Madras, I approached Sir T. M. Iyer for subscription. He explained to me that the policy of the Government was wholly hostile to the Congress, that in 1887 when he subscribed for the same, the atmosphere was quite different. I readily assented. I could enter fully into his feelings. I yet lingered after his explanation. Always the busiest and most hard-worked among all gifted men, he looked at me as if to ask why I yet detained him. I represented that his silent and substantial sympathy would be most valued by the Congress and especially by my chief G. Subramania Iyer and that I would not publish his name. He had such implicit confidence in me and so high a regard for my chief, that without a word of dissent, he opened his box, pulled out a currency note, placed it into my hands, and said "Put it down, as from a sympathiser". I bowed in all reverence, his kindness was quite touching. I left the premises with high hopes. I strayed into the opposite bungalow and tried my luck with Sir V. Bashyam Iyengar the same morning. I had known him from my childhood at Kumbakonam. The very word Congress enraged him beyond description. He was astonished that as a member of the Congress Committee I should have been so oblivious of his political predilections that I should have ventured to make such a stupid request. My announcing to him the generosity of Sir T. M. Iyer, and his example, only provoked him all the more. After the exchange of angry words, I with-

drew. My friends of the Committee were simply astounded at the composition of the political mind in India of talented Indians as exemplified in that day's experience of these two eminent Indians.

HIGH COURT AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Only once in all my life did I have the pleasure and the privilege of listening to Sir T. M. Iyer on politics. One evening when I called on him without any definite object in view, he was in his easy chair in the ground floor of his mansion. It was the dusk of the evening. I found him in a mood of hilarious relaxation after the onerous labours of a busy day. "I have been just thinking of you", he began "Mr G. Subramania Iyer and all of you are doing indeed noble work. You plead for the elevation of Indians. But at times you behave in a very strange, inexplicable way. Why does the *Hindu* object so vehemently to the promotion of Justice Parker to the Governor's Executive Council? It is an exceedingly short-sighted policy you are following. You are undoing a great deal of our good work in politics". Such a pronouncement came upon me as an agreeable surprise, for apart from the merits of the subject, it was to me a a source of inexpressible pleasure that so mighty a personage as Sir T. M. Iyer should condescend to talk to me on current politics, an incident which never occurred in my lifetime or in that of my more experienced colleagues. I put forth the usual argument on behalf of my paper, Judicial independence and the rest of it. That only enraged my host all the more. He attacked me

with redoubled force. "You talk of judicial independence. Is it? Do you know how I feel in the matter? So long as I sit on the Bench of the High Court, I consider I am the sole representative, for the time being, of matters coming within my cognisance, of Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. I recognise no other authority, not even His Excellency the Governor. But when I descend from the Bench and walk out, I recognise His Excellency as the representative of Her Majesty. For you and your friends to attribute motives to High Court Judges, is the unkindest cut, most uncharitable. Is not the choice of Sir Raymond West in Bombay really excellent? Then to-day it is the turn of Mr. Parker. To-morrow the Government may think of putting me in the Council. How are you going to support me? The same objection would prevail against me. So in one voice you are agitating for the advancement of Indian talent; on the other hand at the nick of time, when we are about to reap the fruit of your agitation, you raise all sorts of vain objections; a most suicidal policy. Will you please think over all that I have said and convey them with my compliments to Mr. G. Subramania Iyer?" The Judge took more than an hour to argue out the point with me till about 8.30 in the evening. I communicated the message to my colleagues. They heard it with great interest. But they adhered as usual to their declared policy. The occasion was useful to me in convincing me that the work of political advancement in which we were engaged was after all a sacred one, which appealed

to all Indians, of all shades of opinion, whether they openly befriended us in our work or not and that in the long run patient toil in national upliftment is sure to tell. Government abandoned the idea of calling in to their aid Justice Parker. I believe he went home as a retired Judge.

THE MADRAS MAHAJANA SABHA

The Madras Mahajana Sabha is one of the oldest political institutions of the country. Its life and activities have been contemporaneous with those of the once-far-famed Poona Sarva Janik Sabha and the Indian Association of Calcutta. Its main functions in those days consisted in submitting loyal protests and modest representations in regard to Indian grievances and aspirations to the local and imperial Governments. It extended its hearty welcome to incoming Viceroys and provincial Governors. Occasionally by way of a momentary diversion from its high political altitude, it descended to the purely ornamental and social function of according a warm welcome to the Indian Princes reigning over Native States when they honoured the capital of the Presidency with their resplendent personality and gorgeous entourage for a few days. On one of such occasions, I was a member of the Mahajana Sabha deputation that waited on His Highness the late Maharaja Sree Chamarajendra Wodayar Bahadur of Mysore. It was the first time that I saw that most "remarkable statesman", Seshadri Iyer, (subsequently Sir) who read the reply of His Highness to the Sabha's address in a clear, loud, and impressive

manner. It then struck me at first sight that the Mysore Dewan was one designed by God to command and to rule and to carry into effect his cherished aims. Stalwart in stature, proportionately well compassed in height and girth, with a stern look in the face and with an appearance of majestic non-chalance, he was one who in any assembly of thousands of men, could be singled out, from at a distance, as one of undaunted spirit, who could be pitted successfully, against any talented political of any imperial race in the contest for the exercise of unbridled authority and the arts of diplomacy essential for winning in the race of inter-racial, inter-provincial and political discussions and arguments. At that time I never dreamt of a possibility in life of my coming ever in close contact with him, as it actually happened years after.

The Mahajana Sabha in those days had a keen desire to go to the help of the ryots and it embarked on an investigation into the economic condition of the people, a most stupendous task. I mention this only to show that the political instincts of some of my countrymen nearly forty or fifty years ago were far, far in advance of the everyday programme of the British Indian Government. Mr. G. Subramania Iyer and Rai Bahadur P. Anandacharlu were the two gentlemen who did most of the writing work of the Sabha. The former made me a Corresponding Member of the Sabha while I was at Coimbatore, a high political non-official distinction, in those days, just as much as a member of the working committee of the All-India Congress committee of the

present day. I travelled from village to village in some of the taluqs of the Coimbatore District and collected a lot of figures and forwarded them to the Sabha. I then hardly knew that later on in life I was destined to work out the same problem in Mysore under the inspiring and persistent guidance of Sir M. Visveswarayya. Thus my interest in the economic condition of the ryot was awakened early in life. But I do not see yet any signs of my yearning being satisfied. The economic problem is such an unworkable labyrinth, and once we get ourselves entangled in it, there seems to be no way out for the laying out of postulates and propositions which will carry with them conviction and will lead to a solution acceptable to all parties concerned. I shall not enlarge on this theme at present. I merely refer to it as a side issue. The work of the Sabha in those days and my own humble contribution to it, have been referred to, by Justice Dewan Bahadur A. Ramachandra Iyer of the Mysore Chief Court who was regarded then as one of the most capable journalists and advocates of his time, in the following letter.

Bangalore,
16*th July*, 1886.

"Dear Sir,....Your kind letter, dated 15th inst. to hand. I am glad to hear that you have got an appointment in the *Hindu* office. You hold a very sacred and responsible office. But I am sure that you will do credit to it. When I had the pleasure of seeing you at the Cosmopolitan Club in December last and requested you

to inform me of the proceedings of the Mahajana Sabha and of the work done by the delegates from Coimbatore, I was very much struck by the short and clear account you gave me, by your enthusiasm and by the earnestness and patience with which you had gone about, from village to village, to collect information from ryots. I thought you would succeed well wherever hard work and patience were required and that you were qualified to expound the views of Government to the people and to represent the difficulties and grievances of the latter to the consideration of the former. I am glad you have got an appointment which will give full scope for the exercise of your intellectual and moral virtues. Kindly remember me to Messrs. Subramania Iyer and Veeraraghavachari.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
A. Ramachandra Iyer.

A STARTLING DISCLOSURE

When I was on the staff of the *Hindu*, on one occasion there was a startling incident on a semi-public occasion which caused a great deal of merriment in select circles. There is at times real romance in our every day life which does not for some personal considerations obtain as much publicity as they would undoubtedly in countries like England. On one evening the Editor handed over to me an invitation for a big social gathering on that night in one of the most stately mansions of Madras, convened by a commercial mag-

nate in honour of that most exalted personage in all India, His Excellency the Viceroy. He asked me to attend the function and to make the usual report on the morrow. Though we had special reporters on the staff, at rare and long intervals, I had to exchange places with them and do the work of a Reporter in addition to that of the Sub-Editor. On such occasions I enjoyed my avocation a good deal by exchanging views with the Reporters of other newspapers and writing freely on high and low. That evening the spacious grounds had been brilliantly illuminated, carriages and horses of varied sizes and descriptions were pouring in, in a regular stream, and depositing their occupants on the front steps of the inner verandah. There were the usual varieties of 'tamasha', and there was the much admired 'jadai kolattam', by a number of dancing girls imported from Tanjore. In the midst of this hilarity at about 10-30 P.M. a splendid carriage drawn by a pair of magnificent horses entered the compound, and from it alighted an Indian nobleman dressed in white, and of a grandeur in appearance which defies description. With him alighted a lady whose person was decorated with the costliest gems. The assembled ladies and gentlemen—such of them as were near, offered the pair a right royal welcome. There were the shaking of hands, enquiries of health, and smiling invitations for witnessing the many amusements so lavishly provided by the hospitable host. The next morning we—Reporters of different papers—vied with one another in depicting the scenes of the previous night. However one of us

had a small suspicion, and it proved a fatal one. We knew that the nobleman whom we specially noticed belonged to a community which never brought their ladies out with them on such occasions. We enquired among ourselves who the lady might be that had kept company with our rich countryman and who so gracefully alighted with him from the carriage and received such hearty welcome from her enlightened sisters assembled there. The more we tried to solve the mystery the more inexplicable it became. At last one of us thought that only a small para. in the shape of a query would solve the problem. Some one newspaper was found which was willing to shove in such an apparently innocuous query? It was but the signal for litting a fire which was all consuming. There could be no further answer to it. It was discovered that the lady was a dancing girl who had been temporarily elevated to the position of a partner for the occasion. The news spread like wild fire. The Govenment House was up in arms, oh! what a great sacrilege all people hoarsely cried at the top of their voice. The ladies who had shaken hands that night were horrified and demanded explanations from their ignorant husbands, as to how they took them to such a gathering. Inquisitive Madras was watching the final course of events. However, God came to our rescue. The Government had a philanthropic scheme to push through and was anxious to collect a round, large sum. A public meeting was held in the Banquetting Hall. I attended that meeting also. The gentleman who had a jolly night sent word sub-

scribing a staggering amount to the charity espoused by the Government. Some reliable friend whispered into my ears that, that subscription atoned sufficiently for the romance of the other night. I said with a hearty laugh "All is well that ends well".

CHAPTER X

THE COURTALLAM SCANDAL

I believe there are yet in the land of the living some whose memory will carry them backwards to what forms the heading of this paragraph. Courtallam is a famous sanatorium in the Tinnevelly District, I believe almost on the borders of the Travancore State—to which for one or two months every year, Indians and Europeans, ladies and gentlemen, high and low, resort in good numbers to bathe in the celebrated waterfall, to recoup their failing health.

A graduate pleader of Cuddalore—if I mistake not Krishna Iyer by name--a gentleman of great local reputation and one of somewhat singularly pacific disposition and his wife, a lady of delicate health, had once gone to Courtallam. Both the husband and the wife were not well, and both of them went there specially for the bath and for reaping whatever benefits the waterfall would confer on them. Sir K. Seshadri Iyer also, by mere chance, happened to be there at the time, having gone for the sake of his health all the way from Mysore. One day a most regrettable scuffle took place between the lady (Mrs. Krishna Iyer) and an European who was also bathing at the same place. The lady was pushed aside or was treated with marked rudeness. The husband interceded on her behalf and came to

grief. Some of the peons of the Mysore Dewan, who were on the spot, with that spirit of admirable chivalry which marks a race of men with whom sovereignty is an indigenous and a living force in their own native environment, rushed forth for the rescue of both the husband and the wife, and the European was made to feel that after all a high caste Hindu lady had within her sight enough of protection. Thus Mysore saved the national reputation. But the European had the imperial instinct on his behalf. An indefensible assault on one side, followed by a good slap from the other, which in all self-governing countries, would be brushed aside as a matter of no consequence and would have ended with an apology from the assailant to the lady and her husband, in his sane moments, assumed a formidable shape. The loudest cry of Indian *versus* European began to be heard throughout the entire Presidency of Madras. The European put the Mysore peons in Court —on the Magisterial side. The British Civilian District Magistrate—one well-known for his racial bias-fanned the flame of the controversy. It appeared as if he thought it necessary to establish once again the ascendancy of the British in India because it was in great danger. He sentenced the peons to long terms of rigorous imprisonment. The most orthodox bigotted village Brahmin Purohit who is regarded as a bundle of superstition, is, in my opinion, only equalled by the equally bigotted British Civilian who sees danger to the British overlordship in India in ordinary scuffles between Europeans and Indians. The former conscientiously believes that the

whole grand edifice of his sacred ancient religion would crumble to pieces if the dull formula is interfered with. With equal queer blindness the English Officer, however enlightened, sees signs of downfall for the majesty of British rule, if the rudeness of his countrymen is met with a well-deserved chastisement at our hands. The Mysore Dewan it was then reported, hastily sought peace of mind in that land of historic charity—Travancore—by going across the British border. Some of the comrades in high office of the Dewan came to Madras to which the agitation had been transferred by the appeal of the condemned men to the High Court. Indian Mysore *versus* European Tinnevelly was the all pervading war cry. Just as in the Garstin Dacoity Case—the innocence of Crole depended on the acquittal of the Gautamanaikanur Zemindar, in the Courtallam Scandal, the good name of the Mysore Dewan—if not his freedom from molestation—depended in the public view, on the quashing of the sentence of conviction pronounced by the civilian District Magistrate. In both the cases, there was the element of supposed incitement lurking behind in the minds of the authorities and of their partisans; this suspicion produced in turn in the public mind an extraordinary degree of sympathy for the victims of official antipathy and what is more, poisoned the public mind into the belief that it was the direction of the local officialdom that culminated in the incrimination in a public trial of the men concerned. The High Court of Madras, the palladium of justice, as in the Gautamanaikanur Case, in the Courtallam Scandal

also, quashed the conviction acquitted honourably the Mysore peons, and restored the public mind to its normal tranquillity. It was on this occasion that I first met Mr. V. P. Madhav Rao when he came to Madras—and if I mistake not—was staying for a few days in the stately mansion of Raja Sir Savalai Ramaswamy Mudaliar. His enthusiasm and unremitting guidance from behind the screens of both the legal and journalistic forces in favour of Mysore, with a marvellous degree of courage, gave me and my friends of the *Hindu* Office an insight into the remarkable abilities and predominating magnetism of a figure destined to leave its marks permanently in the annals not only of Mysore, but also those of Travancore and Baroda. The civilian District Magistrate of Tinnevelly who became so unpopular, in spite of his great merits in other respects, never rose higher in official life—to a status to which he would have been, but for the Courtallam incident, acclaimed with joy by the Indian public.

CHAPTER XI

THE ADAMANTINE WALL

Early in life I had convincing proof of the mighty prestige of the British Indian Civilian and how when that prestige was in danger, no considerations of justice or equity ever intervened on behalf of those who were victimised by civilian wrath. The small fingers of Mr. H. S. Thomas, I.C.S., were far mightier than the loins of Justice Muthusamy Iyer, J. B. Pennington, B. M. Malabari, and the entire Indian and Anglo-Indian press including such professedly pro-Government organs such as "The Pioneer", *The Madras Mail*, *The Madras Times* and John Bull Overseas. For about 25 years from 1886 I and my brothers carried on as vehement a campaign as it was possible for us to do, to get justice for my father for the unjust persecutions by Mr. H. S. Thomas. We never succeeded. Once I called on a Member of Government. He had made a great name for the re-organisation of the Salt and Abkari Department and for the introduction into that Department for the first time of educated Indians in positions of trust and responsibility. I remember even to-day the very expressive and altogether untenable remark he made as a Member of the Madras Government. "The *papam* and the *punniyam* of Sir Grant Duff's Government are his own. We have

nothing to do with them." I contended that the British Government was an eternal continuing force, and it was its precious privilege to revise the orders of the preceding administration if there were grounds for such revision. He refused to accept this view. Subsequently years after, one day, I called on another of the same rank. He was a highly gifted, highly talented, and highly accomplished civilian administrator who if his lot had been cast to-day would have done honour as a Governor of any Presidency. The Graduates of the Madras Presidency of great distinction—most of them, owe him a life-long gratitude for the paternal interest he took in their advancement and the steady manner in which he brought many of them to very high and exalted positions. It was also he who, as a rule in semi-official life, introduced the principle of equality of treatment. As a Member of Government, he fought bravely for the Madras Presidency, and it was our view that the Government of India of those days wantonly ignored his claims to guide the destinies of India in a higher sphere as they were mortally afraid of a signal defeat of their policy of preferences against the Madras Government, if he were invited for a five years so journ in the heights of Simla. Thus I was one of his warmest admirers. But even he, I was surprised, at times could not overcome this inherent weakness of his order to brush aside all other considerations when the question of prestige presented itself as a great stumbling block.

As one of the Secretaries to Government, he had exhibited such courage in pulling up all departments of the Government to greater efficiency that his name carried no small terror to several Heads of Departments. I have thus far freely recognised his superior talents to shew that I am not actuated by any petty-mindedness if I mention the following incident to which I refer merely to justify the heading of this para. As Collector of the Tanjore District, in a moment of supreme courage and high sense of impartiality—he had made the following startling remarks in his own handwriting in the confidential official register about my father. "C. Krishna Rao is the victim of Thomas' bad temper", after looking into all the connected records. (At that time Mr. Thomas was Member of the Board of Revenue and in active service.) He shewed it to Mr. Tillanayagam Pillai, the Deputy Collector of the Division. When he also had been sent home on the report of Mr. Thomas, Mr. Pillai came to me, told me of the above; and advised me as a last resort to embody this observation in a petition to the Madras Government. We entrusted the drafting of the petition to that trenchant writer Mr. E. Norton. A copy of the petition I gave in person to the then Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor. Another was formally addressed to the Secretary to the Government. With a third I went for an interview to the Member. A second or two after I handed over the petition, he turned pages rapidly till he came to the page where the above quotation was in print, and pointing to it asked me why that

observation of his was quoted. I replied that I had the authority of Mr. Pillai and expressed the view that when a person's whole public career was brought to an abrupt sorry termination and he was deprived of his post and pension, at such a crisis he was justified in quoting any extraordinary expressions of good opinion recorded in his favour by his official superiors. He startled me by saying "*I won't acknowledge it*". I retorted: "*The question is not whether you acknowledge it or not. Is it a fact or not?*" At once he was in the hottest temper. He rose from his seat. I also followed his example. As both of us were standing at the narrow stair case in the verandah of the upper floor, one facing the other, I felt I had not only failed to enlist his sympathy for which express purpose I had gone to him, but as adverse fate would have it, I had thrown him into a fit of irreconcilable rage. As a rule while I speak out my mind in the discussion of public or personal matters, the idea of parting company with anyone in anger is most repulsive to me. On such occasions I try my best to pacify the passions I had roused and to depart in peace. On this momentous occasion I said: "This is not the only topic I wished to discuss with you this morning. I have in view one or two absolutely impersonal subjects". He at once changed his attitude, resumed his seat, asked me to sit down, and there was an agreeable change in his look and demeanour. We discussed the latest Departmental Reviews—and in a few minutes, after I saw that I had restored him to his normal mind, I took leave of him. I had absolutely no hope

of the petition being considered. On another occasion I saw a third of this order at Bangalore. He was of a genial temper. He asked me to send my representation to him to Ootacamund. I obeyed him. On the fourth day the Under or Assistant Secretary sent me the usual formal endorsement, a printed one, which saw no reason to interfere!

Such stalwart journalists like G. Subramania Iyer and Malabari took a genuine interest in carrying on an agitation regarding this case while they were in England, as they sincerely felt that it was one of the best cases in which their whole influence and strength could be well put to the test. All the three of us felt that one great defect of British Indian rule was that British administrators often forget an Indian officer has a wife and children to maintain and a family to look after. In regard to European servants, high and low, what we read in all State Despatches often is the privations of the families of the officers and the necessity for generous provision for them even in cases of the officers being found guilty of offences or lapses. Similar considerations of humanity and equity never once seriously enter into the minds of our demi-gods—if the victim happens to be an Indian. Perhaps matters have altered for the better now, after our agitation for the past several generations. G. Subramania Iyer in his letter dated 23rd July, 1897 after his return from England wrote to me thus in regard to this subject.

"I am extremely sorry I was not able to do anything about your father. I went to the India Office three

times to see Sir Stewart Bayley but couldn't find him. And then from what I saw and learnt of people in London, I soon came to the conclusion that I should accomplish nothing by attempts of this nature. People are very polite and courteous in conversation, but the moment you talk to them about business they become stiff and formal". Thenceforward I gave up the pursuit and when Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao long afterwards began his onslaught on the Civil Service, as soon as he entered the Congress ranks, I thought he had hit the right point and that one of the greatest reforms in the work of the future—in India—is the abolition of this adamantine wall of the British Indian administration, known as the Civil Service—and the havoc which its apprehensions regarding its prestige does—and stands in the way of justice between man and man merely because a civilian cannot be put to disgrace—and one Civilian would not generally rectify the injustice done by or at the instance of another.

CHAPTER XII

THE SECOND CALCUTTA CONGRESS

For the Indian National Congress held at Calcutta for a second time, a strong and distinguished party of not less than sixty gentlemen, most of them of very eminent professional and intellectual calibre, left Madras by steamer. The Madras Bar was exceedingly well represented. Rai Bahadur P. Anantacharlu, Salem Vijiaraghavachariar, P. R. Sundara Iyer, V. R. Krishnaswami Iyer, S. Kasturiranga Iyengar and Jambulinga Mudaliar were on board the steamer. Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao joined the party as a venerable Guru. The Editor and the Managing Proprietor of *The Hindu* consented to efface themselves on this occasion and with a self-abnegation which had my grateful acknowledgment they stayed at Head-Quarters and permitted me to go in their stead. It was a delightful voyage. The Captain of the ship was of a very amiable and genial temper. The venerable interpreter of the Sastras Raghunatha Rao—lived on board the steamer—for full five days without a morsel of cooked food. He had brought with him the best coffee essence he could prepare at home and had in a tin or two of peas and dried fruits. He accepted milk from the party. He was regular in his baths and recitations of holy texts and, like the Rishis of old, sat

quite content with as frugal a diet as possible. We had a Brahmin cook and we had special permission to cook in the Brahminical way at a certain hour of the noon and the evening. The Brahmin meals were served us in our rooms. But Dewan Bahadur would not budge an inch. He would have nothing of the food cooked by Brahmins on board the steamer. He was the very picture of health and his face beamed with a contentment, a singular characteristic of the East. What a contrast between the East and the West ? According to the latter ideal, one eats (or drinks) at least 4 or 5 times a day, and the dinner and the supper are looked forward with appetising zest. But according to the former, a cup of milk and a few dried fruits and a few peas, with a small plantain if available, would suffice to keep the body and soul together. Varnashrama Dharma of the most curious type was represented by a Sri vaishnava gentleman, who had brought with him for all the five days of the journey, prepared rice food and closed his cabin door, even against his Brahmin friends at the time he swallowed the cold rice preparation. I was then in a mood of aggressive criticism and referred to this incident in my special letters to *The Hindu* from the steamer. As soon as we reached Calcutta, my esteemed friend, when he saw the paper, was naturally displeased with me, but I asked his forgiveness for what I considered my duty.

A BOGUS PERSONALITY

At Calcutta Dewan Bahadur as soon as we alighted from the steamer, asked me whether I would

work for a few days as his Private Secretary as he had some important personages to interview. I cordially agreed. He was so pleased that he insisted on my staying with him in his special camp and not frequenting the general Congress Mess. One morning Dewan Bahadur took me for a long drive and at last we found ourselves in the grand mansion of W. C. Bonnerjee, the most gifted Bengali Barrister, and undaunted Indian Patriot, who fought strenuously all his life for political emancipation. If I mistake not, Mr. Bonnerjee himself was then in England. Dewan Bahadur said to me that an Irish gentleman on the staff of Her Majesty the Queen Empress, and one who had the ear of the great and illustrious British Throne, was just then in the mansion. He was to have an interview with him on Social Reform topics, and the Irish friend had a special message from Her Imperial Majesty, in favour of Social Reforms, and had been instructed to gather the best Hindu opinion on the subject. Dewan Bahadur was struck with amazement and pleasure which were inexpressible and beyond measurement. The interview lasted for two and a half hours. All my reports, even when on one or two occasions, I had to report important cases enquired into by Sessions Judges, were in long hand. I invariably put them in indirect form and gave merely a summary. Dewan Bahadur suggested that my narrative of the interview should be copied fair and shown to our distinguished guest who had come all the way from London before it was printed in the papers. In the great excite-

ment of theCongress, in addition to despatching telegrams to *The Hindu* every day, I found time to finish up my special interview account. Just then Dewan Bahadur asked me to give him the fair copy, and all my rough notes. I obeyed him. He took me aside and whispered into my ear "We have been deceived completely. The gentleman whom we interviewed has absolutely no connection with the British Royalty or the British Parliament. He is a mere adventurer. What do you say?" I said "It is providential you discovered this, before I had posted the copy or telegraphed the contents. Why not we consign the records to the flames?

He said "all right. I just happened to meet an eminent Bengalee brother and in the course of conversation he took me into his confidence and gave me the warning. I am sorry to have given you so much trouble."

THE TURKISH BATH

At Calcutta, I parted company with Dewan Bahadur. Jambulingam, M. Ramaswami Naidu, and myself, went on tour to Prayag, Muttra, Brindaban, Gokul, Agra and Delhi. Ramaswami Naidu was a resident of Madras, a public spirited friend of the Reform party. He saddled himself with the management of the "*Indian Social Reformer*" and was thus moving like a brother with me and my friends. At Delhi, he and Jambulingam told me that they would stay a day or two longer and had decided to have a taste of the Turkish Bath and if possible to run up to Haridwar. Owing to want of time,

I could not prolong my stay further and took leave of them. In the course of our travels, in Northern India I made the acquaintance of D. Venkataramaiah, B.A., and H. Narasinga Rao, B.A., two of the Nationalist leaders of Mysore—who were devoting their lives exclusively to an agitation in favour of Mysoreans and who were resisting to their best the autocratic tendencies of the then Mysore Ministers. Ramaswami Naidu, who stayed behind, had his bath, caught a malignant fever and came back to Madras to die a very early death. We all mourned his fate and from that time the Delhi Turkish Bath and its details are associated in my mind, with or without reason, with feelings of great horror.

THE NAGPUR JUNGLES

From Delhi I travelled straight without a break to Nagpur. At Nagpur, the celebrated Naidu family offered me a warm welcome. The head of the family was a self-made and opulent member of the local Bar and had sent his son to England for study. After staying a few hours with him I engaged a Jutka and started for a road-side village 30 miles off where Mr. Monro, the Inspector-General of Education, Central Provinces, was then in camp. He belonged originally to the Madras Educational Service. He had revolutionised and liberalised the Nagpur educational schemes and as he had helped me much at Coimbatore, I desired to pay him a visit. I reached the village just at 5-30 in the evening, and was then informed to my dismay that the I.-G. of Education had left that place three hours ago for a village 15 or 20

miles off. The Jutkawalah flatly refused to proceed an inch further. Both he and his horse could not stand any further journey. For a moment I was in a hopeless confusion. I however laid aside all apprehensions. To turn one's back on one's cherished schemes is most oppressive to me. I could not endure the agony. Therefore I went into the village and with the aid of the village headman, secured a common bullock-cart, without any covering, left the jutka there to wait for my return journey on the morrow, and all alone ventured forth in the Nagpur jungles. We reached our destination at 10 P.M. The night was cold. All the day from the morning 8 o'clock I had been travelling. I drove straight to Mr. Monro's camp. Under the shade of a mighty Banyan tree—a historic one, in that under that shade once were encamped thousands of Appa Saheb's warrior bands engaged in mortal contest with the western Powers, Mr. and Mrs. Monro were sitting in two chairs with a blazing fire of twigs before them. The Daloyet in attendance, standing at a distance, flatly refused to take my card. To him I appeared almost mad, to disturb his master at that hour of a cold January night. I left him behind. He was so good as not to obstruct my passage, which he would have been quite justified in doing and abstension from which might have even cost him his appointment. I thanked him and rushed in straight to where Mr. Monro was sitting. As soon as he saw my figure approaching him he rose from his chair and said "Who you?" I gently whispered my name. He was astonished and surprised. He ordered

the peon to bring a chair for me, and after I sat down, whispered some words into his wife's ears. The lady went into the tent behind. Mr. Monro, after expressing his surprise at my taking him unawares, asked me whether I would sleep for the night in his tent and offered me bread and milk. After thanking him for his proffered hospitality I said I would feel comfortable only after I had a bath and would prefer to stay for the night with a Brahmin friend if there were any in that wilderness. Mr. Monro at once pulled out a paper, wrote a few words on it, called the Daloyet, gave it to him, and ordered him to take a lantern and guide me to the residence of the Deputy Inspector of Schools—a very good Brahmin gentleman of advanced age, who had taken up his lodgings at a Musafarkhana, a mile from the tent. The peon was very glad at such a satisfactory turn affairs had taken and was profuse in his compliments to me and was exceedingly proud of the kindness of the Saheb to an Indian visitor. He had never seen or heard of such an incident in his long service under European masters. It was nearly 11 o'clock at night when I reached the quarters of the Deputy Inspector of Schools. A worthy representative of an ancient Brahmin stock, he had finished his supper and was sitting on the outside verandah, singing the holy songs in Marathi. His melodious voice and the noble sentiments contained in the verses filled me with rapturous joy. I had at last wandered into an excellent resort. My host offered me all he had. I had my bath and a cup of hot milk. I wanted nothing else. We

exchanged thoughts till three in the morning and after two hours' rest prepared ourselves for our long walk to the camp. The whole landscape looked very bright. The Sun was shining very brilliantly. Everywhere the birds were singing the glory of God. When we reached the tent under the gigantic Banyan tree which spread its stems and branches far and wide, Mr. Monro came out, took me aside and after a hearty shake of the hands, felt my body all over and told me "Till now, till I saw you in flesh and bone and till I examined your person so minutely, I was in great doubt. I thought last night, it was the ghost of Subba Rao which paid me such a visit. I had not heard from you for such a long time. I could never believe that you would go to such a distant jungle simply to see me, after so many years. It was therefore that I suggested to my wife that she should withdraw at once. Now I shall introduce you to her. I had an idea that ghosts never survive the day dawn. I shall all my life never forget this bold adventure of yours. It is impossible to forget it."

For the moment I felt I had been fully compensated for all my troubles in the outburst of such generous appreciation. For I had no object at all beyond simply getting a sight of Mr. Monro and that for a few seconds, as one of my past benefactors. However that touched his heart to the utmost. The whole party walked nearly half a mile from the tent. There we came across a small rivulet. Mr. Monro said "Gentlemen, now I take leave of you. According to Hindu traditions, when the guest reaches a river, or bridge or temple, there the host

takes leave of the guest. This river is the parting point." We returned to our Musafarkhana. The Deputy Inspector insisted on my staying with him a few hours, but I could not comply with his request as I had to be at Nagpur to catch the Mail train in the evening. I travelled back the 50 miles in the bullock-cart and the Jutka. At a stretch I came to Madras without breaking my journey.

CHAPTER XIII

G. SUBRAMANIA IYER

Of all the great dynamic forces making for steady and sustained development of India in all important spheres political, social and industrial, one of the most powerful personalities with whom I was privileged to come into close contact was that of G. Subramania Iyer. Few educated men of our times, rising from a humble origin, qualifying themselves for public work in India itself and by their own self effort) wielded their pen with greater effect successively for two generations than the distinguished subject of this sketch. I feel now, at this distance of time, I can safely and without being influenced by personal predilections or prejudices, do some justice to the memory of the illustrious father of South Indian journalism, English and Tamil. I believe that the friends and lovers of Tamil literature and of the enlightenment of the masses through the vernacular, will fully realise, how about fifty years ago, when the grand process of denationalisation was going on at its highest speed, when blind admiration for everything foreign, dress, language, diet, religion and manners, was the prevailing rage among the bulk of the handful of English educated Indians, Christian Missionary efforts at conversions were meeting with marvellous success, G. Subramania Iyer had the farsightedness and patri-

otism to discover that along with a newspaper in English, it was his duty to enlighten the masses of the people through the vernacular. In those days, all sparks of national self-respect had been almost extinguished and even the most learned savants in Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit were openly called uneducated and ignorant. Ignorant of what? Not of the eternal spiritual verities of life, not of the ever existing consciousness of God as the living witness of all of our desires and actions, not of the feeling of delicacy and politeness, not of the value of patient and life-long suffering which the Indian sky inures us to.

It was in such times that "The Swadesamitran", 'The Friend of the country' was founded and it was the intrepid and incessant writings of G. Subramania which gave it a power in the land, which is so well sustained by his talented and equally patriotic successors to-day.

HIS EARLY CAREER

Regarding his early career, I shall quote his own words.

"The Hindu Office,
Mount Road,
Madras, July 26, 1897.

"Dear Subba Rao,

I have directed the news you refer to, to be disposed of exactly as you desire.

You have probably seen the explanation I have sent to 'The *Mail*' and 'The *Times*' about my so-called plagiarism. It is very unfortunate I did not know that

I had roused so much jealousy among some people. I take it as a sign of my success.

About the queries in your letter of the 23rd, I was born in 1853 in Trivady (Tanjore) was educated in the Taluq School, Trivady, and then in the S.P.G. Mission School, Tanjore, passed Matriculation in 1869, F.A. in 1871, and the B.A. (privately) in 1877. After passing the F.A., I was a village school-master on Rs. 16.

Then was trained in the Government Normal School under Mr. G. Bickle during 1874-75; was school-master successively in the Church of Scotland Mission Institution, in Pachaiyappa's College and in the Triplicane A. V. School of which last I was the Head-master till the end of the year 1883. I started *The Hindu* with a few friends of whom Mr. Veera-raghavachariar is the only man that stuck on, as a weekly in September, 1878. It was made tri-weekly in 1884 and Daily in 1889. I had seven brothers and two sisters, of whom five brothers are now living. Why do you want this information?

How official you are becoming, Subba Rao? Your letter with paragraphs, your writing on a torn scrap of paper, your fear of publicity—are these signs of a change? I have not had a word from Saligram Subba Rao. I hope he is well.

Yours truly,
G. S. Iyer."

I put him the queries, because even then I had an idea of one day writing a memoir of his life.

SALIGRAM SUBBA RAO

Saligram Subba Rao, to whom he refers in the above letter, was a very intimate friend of both of us. He was one of the talented Advocates of the Mysore Chief Court, and was the regular Bangalore correspondent of *The Hindu*, A Mysorean by birth and instinct, an admirer and friend of all Indians in whom there was merit. Saligram often incurred the active and even malignant displeasure of his countrymen in power owing to his leanings towards his Madrasee comrades. Scrupulously clean and tidy in attire and appearance, polite and courteous to an extraordinary degree, with a warm heart which made him offer lavish hospitality to friends and acquaintances, Saligram by his literary labours contributed in his days a good deal to the formation of sound public opinion on all Mysore matters. His friendship with G. Subramania Iyer was of the most enduring type. Whenever Saligram went to Madras he stayed with G. Subramania Iyer and whenever the latter came to Bangalore, Saligram made him quite comfortable. Saligram took an abiding interest in starting schools for boys and girls in his vicinity. His knowledge of criminal law was profound, his forensic abilities were of a high order and above all he was one of the best Mysoreans I have ever come across. His independence of judgment and his faith in moderate representation of his views in the public press, extorted great admiration.

TWO PERIODS

To understand aright, the achievements and failures of G. Subramania Iyer, we have to remember that there were two distinct periods of his life—one before he became a practical Social Reformer and when he actually confined his work and energies to politics and the other in the latter portion of his life, after he had made a Herculean effort to set a practical example of reform in his own family. During the first period, he was the very model of independence and uprightness.

NATIONAL SELF-RESPECT

Once at the beginning of my entry into "*The Hindu*" Office, I asked him what his view was regarding our association with our Rulers in a friendly capacity, a studied effort to keep ourselves in their good graces. He replied that it would be the last thing he would ever think of doing. He would be glad to be away from all Government House functions and from all intimate contact with Englishmen. I asked him why? His reply was the most intelligent I have ever heard on this important subject. He said, "Our Rulers are very strong in qualities in which we are very weak. Their intense love of their own country, their passionate pride of their own achievements and greatness, their unsurpassed courage, and their inordinate love of their own race, as against all coloured people, all these would suffice to cause dismay in us; generally the weaker, when he becomes a comrade of the stronger sinks into insignificance. We are apt to forget or ignore altogether at once all about our country, our culture and our future.

Our independent and natural growth will be impeded. We would always require some mightier force on which to hang ourselves; someone to lean on till eternity. We would require benefactors and can never stand on our own legs. What we have to acquire is the power of standing erect on our own unaided legs and ability to manage our own affairs. This is not possible if we always depend on the smiles and frowns of our Rulers. They will be perfectly justified in taking all possible advantage in tightening their hold on us. In fact we will have to surrender our judgment to their sweet pleasure in all matters affecting the vital interests of the country. The so-called independence which we may manifest for stage purposes, will not stand scrutiny. Like a house of cards, it will collapse at mere touch."—a reasoned political philosophy, based on no hatred or vile sentiment, but solely on the desire to cultivate the supreme virtue of relying on ourselves.

HIS SENSE OF ABSOLUTE IMPARTIALITY

"What then is our policy in this matter as an every-day working plan?" I asked him to further pursue the subject. He replied: "My policy is one of friendliness to Britons, sincere admiration for all the virile manly virtues of the race, an absolutely impartial policy of commendation and condemnation according to their merits and defects in administration. I entertain no racial bias in my judgment of men and measures. An English Officer and an Indian Officer are the same to me. I shall criticise them without any difference as their actions are good or bad. At the same time, I wish to

be always able to be as far aloof from Englishmen in power, as possible, so that, I may not by degrees and unconsciously surrender my judgment to their decision or make myself liable to the charge of ingratitude". Mr. G. Subramania Iyer manfully struggled hard to maintain this high policy which at times estranged him completely both from his own countrymen and from Englishmen. In Bengal, where both English and Vernacular journalism had been developed far earlier than in Madras, a quite different policy had been popular. Taking the cue from some of the more powerful Anglo-Indian papers, which, as a rule, upheld everything British and condemned or damned with faint praise everything, however laudable, pertaining to Indians, journalism elsewhere admired everything Indian and quietly ignored all Indian defects. But Mr. G. Subramania adopted another policy. His own countrymen came in for their share of the bitterest criticism and strongest invectives, just as much as any British Officer, who might have indulged in re-actionary speech or policy. Gradually the best of Englishmen and Indians appreciated it. I know how glad some Governors and District administrators were after having come in for severe castigation in the columns of the *Hindu*, to find appreciative references in the same paper prior to their departure from India. Sir William Meyer and Sir Henry Cotton were genuine admirers of the severe discipline of Mr. G. Subramania Iyer. The former was in the Board of Revenue, while I was at Madras. He did not come much into personal contact with Mr. G. Subra-

mania Iyer, but he was a regular reader of the *Hindu*; and years afterwards, once when he came to Madras from Simla for a few days' stay, in reply to my letter from Bangalore, he wired to me to go to Madras to the Madras Club and said to me that the fact that I was a colleague in public work with Mr. G. Subramania Iyer was a sufficient passport for considerate treatment. In the second Calcutta Congress, I called on Sir Henry Cotton and he at once burst forth into great praise of the *Hindu*. He said: "Look here please, I carefully keep on that table a regular file of the *Hindu* and consult it when necessary. If only Bengal papers were as considerate and as impartial as the *Hindu* then the administration of Bengal would be far easier". I replied that the Anglo-Indian Press of the Presidency and in its vicinity was partly at any rate responsible for the deplorable racial turn so often visible in the Bengali Press.

Even highly intellectual Indians, at times, were very hard on Mr. G. Subramania Iyer and bitterly resented his policy of exposing the foibles and follies of his own countrymen. One morning four or five of my acquaintances of Triplicane and Mylapore, very cultured men, called on me as if on a deputation, and opened a mighty crusade against the policy of the *Hindu* in one respect. Their complaint was as follows:—

"The *Hindu* is our national asset. We all feel a genuine pride and pleasure in reading the paper. But at times our patience is sorely tried. When high placed Indians who have achieved success as lawyers, statesmen,

merchant princes, officials or members of any other profession, die, the *Hindu* the very evening contains long obituary notices, depicting vividly both their virtues and vices, success and failures. Nothing is more repulsive to Indian sentiment than to utter disapprobation against the dead. We cremate our dear ones and return home to find solace and sympathy from all around us, what do we find on that very evening? Comes the *Hindu* with its unrelenting invectives. The praise bestowed on the deceased loses all its charm by the way in which the lapses are portrayed. Can you not realise what intense humiliation and inexpressible grief this causes in the entire family circle, and among all the friends and acquaintances of the deceased? How do you justify such a lamentable policy".

I said in reply " I quite sympathise with you. At times, when I pass the proof, similar objections strike me. But I have never had any discussion with the Editor about this. Can you not see him in person and have a frank talk with him on the subject"? The leader of the deputation said: " That is very fine. You have not yet fully understood your Editor. He is a man of unbending temperament. The more we protest, the stronger will be his persistence in his own policy". I asked them: " Why do you not please put your thoughts on paper and send it to the office. The Editor will surely publish your views". My friend said: " That is of no use. Generally in all public controversies, the Editor has the last word. He would write a strong damning editorial note or add a stinging foot-note and we are

made to cut a sorry figure in public. We have come to you merely to request you to discuss the subject with the Editor and to bring him round gently to our views or let us know on what principles he justifies his present policy". I agreed to undertake this interesting work of friendly reconciliation. A day or two after, I called on Mr. G. Subramania Iyer one morning at his house. He always knew that, unless sent for by him or unless I had something very urgent to communicate to him, I would never disturb him in the morning, when he was invariably very busy. I explained the object of my interview. He explained his policy as follows: "I place the highest value on our national progress. Nothing is dearer to me than the bright future of India. This is our highest and most cherished ideal. All personal considerations are insignificant. I want to impress on my countrymen, high and low, that, whenever any man's career or conduct runs counter to national interests, he can expect no mercy from us, however high he may be. When a man dies, we can review his work fully. We cannot take his name subsequently. The dead do not care for what we write. Let the living take a lesson from our policy. Let both young and old, who like to leave a good name behind them, never forget their sacred obligation to their motherland. Let all feel that even when they die, their defects—if they injure the national cause or national self-respect—will not be forgiven. Let those, who desire to stand well in the opinion of their countrymen after their death, remember their duty to India. Self-seeking tendencies and belittling public

interests have to be fully exposed. It is with great regret that I am writing these obituary notices. But I cannot help it. The feelings of the near and dear ones are as nothing to me when compared with the permanent injury to national interests which some of our eminent men have purposely and consciously done, either for their own advancement or for fear of wounding the delicate and divine susceptibilities of the Members of Government. If you and your friends still think I am in the wrong, let me have your reasons". It struck me that G. Subramania Iyer was in the right. I told him so and informed my friends. They reluctantly but fully admitted that G. Subramania Iyer could not be ousted from the position he had taken up, if the progress of India were the one supreme consideration in deciding the policy. I mention this merely to show how passionately G. Subramania loved political progress and how boldly he even courted the resentment of his countrymen in his sacred task.

PESSIMISTIC OPTIMISM

Often G. Subramania Iyer would fall into trances of great pessimism. On such occasions he would unburden his troubled mind to me. " Do you think there is any hope for our country? I am afraid not. You see mighty national currents are against us. Our permanent home, according to the most cherished Hindu ideals, is not this world. We are merely temporary sojourners. Our final and blessed abode is the other world. It is spiritual salvation that appeals to us most.

Whereas in the case of Western nations, this world is their *summum bonum* of life. They do not care for what occurs after life. Their highest passion is to acquire all that is best in this world and to enjoy it while living. A day of success and glory is more important to them than all dreams of Eternal Salvation. Where is the strong motive power for us to work for political advancement with the same fervour and persistence as our brethren of the West? Then we are born believers in predestination and fatalism. Everything happens to us in this beautiful and bounteous world as previously ordained. So with the minimum self-effort we expect to get the maximum blessing. Whereas in the West, men and women have the most intense faith in human effort and they expect only results commensurate with their attempts. In both these cases, our attempts are bound to fall far short of these usually adopted in the West.

"Then you see in what a deplorable condition we are. We have no army or navy of our own. We have no real voice in the taxation and expenditure of our own country. We are merely in short hewers of wood and drawers of water in our own land. It is all due to our own past mistakes, call it destiny, if you please. But this is the actual position to-day. Where are we, when compared with the nations of the West? How low does India stand in the scale of nations? Does India exercise any influence on the politics of the world? Does India's voice count for anything in the Council of the Nations of the world? As mere show puppets, we are

of course getting on well. India is an object of antiquarian interest to the West. It is a museum of ancient world relics, barbarities and old-fashioned customs. We are more objects of compassion than compeers who command respect and esteem in the eyes of the civilised world. My heart sinks within me often when I think of India and the uphill work of Himalayan magnitude which lies before us."

I said, "Is there then no hope for us?"

He replied thus: "No, no. That is not precisely what I mean. I only put forth my doubts and difficulties. There is only one source of hope. Though we are exceedingly poor in all essential respects in which the West maintains the whip hand, one source of strength is by Divine grace yet left to us. That is the only road to our development. God, in His infinite mercy and wisdom, has left unimpaired, after ages of suffering and servitude, our intellect. Bring to India the best of the representatives of the West, from England, America, or Germany. Give the Indians the same training, the same facilities and the same opportunity. The Indian will invariably hold his own in this world-wide competition; even to-day, as an administrator, as a Judge, as a lawyer, as a Jurist, as a mechanic, as an engineer, as a financier, as a soldier, as a diplomat, as a preacher, in every conceivable direction, there is no walk of life—not one—in which the Indian will fail provided you give him equal opportunities. This is the only weapon we have at present for our national progress. On that I base all my hopes for the future. But unless

we organise all our forces and learn valuable lessons from the West in our daily struggles, we can never hope to realise our ambitions. You ought not to confound the value of adapting to our needs all that is best in the West with slavishly yielding our birthright in our country. No country ever gave a more difficult work to her educated sons than India of to-day. India has no parallel in the world. The responsibility of her educated sons and daughters is immeasurably greater than those of any other country in the West. The scope for patriotic work and sacrifices in so many directions is immense and defies calculation."

TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW.

So great was his enthusiasm for National Progress and so intense and acute his sorrow at the people's inertia, when compared with the marvellous diligence of Western Nations that G. Subramania Iyer would often open his heart in the following strain:—

"Do you know one of our glaring defects? We, as a race and as a rule, never do to-day what we can, with some show of reason, postpone to to-morrow. Whereas in the West, in Germany or Great Britain, they would never postpone to to-morrow what they can, even working till late at night or next morning, at a stretch, finish that very day. Please take note of our immense population and calculate the loss in the national total output of work, intellectual, physical, professional, and mechanical, whatever it may be, for a day and for a year and for a generation. The total money value assessing all

activities at a reasonable proportion will be enormous. I wish our public writers and speakers would not lose sight of this and would do their best to remedy this evil."

LIVING IN THE PAST.

Another incessant complaint of G. Subramania Iyer in regard to national welfare was that the bulk of the people, even not excluding the most enlightened among us, generally find delight in dwelling on the glories of the past, without at the same time recognising in full the vast potentialities of the immediate future. Our golden age for India was in the dim and distant past which only the most fertile imagination can fully penetrate into. G. Subramania Iyer was rightly or wrongly of opinion that as long as a people or nation hugs to its bosom closely the past, without being fully alive to the necessities of the present, it is doomed to eternal disappointment as it can never keep pace in the race of the world. It was his strong conviction that unless our ambitions are directed by a strong and almost irresistible motive power, our energies would not be sustained continuously by the required momentum. G. Subramania Iyer fully recognised the historical value and connection of the Past with the Present, and at times would feel a glow of pride when he descanted on the achievements of our world-famous ancestors in various branches of human knowledge. He was, however, strongly averse to the view that the past exhausted all our greatness. An abiding hope in the Future—a hope which will day and night whisper success and glory in

our ears—was essential to inspire us with the necessary courage and supply the sustaining power for action for indefinitely long periods, without our being baffled and discouraged by obstacles and failures, however serious they may be. He used often to say to me:—

"Our past has reached the highest summit of all human endeavours. If I talk of the wonderful progress of science of to-day, you (meaning thereby a section of the ultra-patriotic and over-reactionary public) tell me that India of old had made more marvellous advance. If I talk of modern democracy and the Cabinet system of England, you refer me to the Conferences under the Banyan tree or temple square in days of yore, and the division of work among the Ministers in the days of Shivaji Maharaj. If I refer to the modern methods of warfare and the terrible engines of destruction and quick transport from one part of the world to the other, you proudly remind me of the times—glorious times indeed—during which a solitary saint with a blade of grass or an arrow would despatch to eternity a whole host of infantry and cavalry, and of the flying of chariots in the air. The ideal sovereign is Sri Rama and the golden age is his period or the one succeeding or preceding it. But we cannot get back to it. As to our attempting to carve out a similar destiny for ourselves, you have the sentiment that they were divine beings or had such wonderful spiritual power which we poor sinning mortals of to-day can neither acquire nor aspire after. The nations of the West are not oppressed by any such sublime thoughts or memories of the

past. To them their present is a great and glorious improvement over their past. They press onwards to the future, with invincible courage, persistence and hope. Their past is almost a blank and primitive when compared with ours. They have no poignant sense of inferiority when compared with their ancestors. This is one aspect of our national life which demands our attention."

THE INDIAN STATES.

G. Subramania Iyer realised in full the importance of Indian States in the Polity of India, and their hoary traditions and sympathised fully with their claims for prosperity untrammelled by extraneous restrictions. Therefore, he opened his columns freely to the contending parties. Hyderabad, Mysore and Travancore were exceedingly well represented in his days, and day after day the internal policies and even the intrigues of the designing forces in the States found the fullest publicity in the columns of the *Hindu*. It was his view that only free discussion and criticism of both men and measures would bring to the surface the aims which were doing mischief by lying underground. Even the powerful among the higher officers could not escape the temptation of bidding for popularity or strengthening their own hands by converting the public to their side by continuous representation in the Press. At times even Indian States situated far away from Madras, such as Baroda, Indore, Gwalior and Kashmir, had their existence made known by being well portrayed in these columns. I need hardly add that the more pushing among

the Madrasees had early enough in the last century invaded successfully all parts of India. I yet remember with what pride and satisfaction G. Subramania Iyer once referred in the leading columns to the career of a Madras gentleman who, by the force of his merits, had reached the highest rungs of the judicial ladder in the Dominions of Maharaja Scindia. G. Subramania Iyer placed a higher value on the social and religious affinities between the subjects of Indian States and of British India than the outward differences—superficial in comparison—caused by mere administrative and political differentiation and exclusiveness. The larger patriotism and the insatiable yearning for unity impelled him to draw closer and closer the people of British India and Indian States by sympathising with the latter in full and giving them his hearty and ready support in their agitation for raising their States to the level of British India in regard to freedom of thought and expression and the introduction of constitutional restraints to control expenditure and give the representatives of the people a real share in the administration of public affairs.

AN ALL-INDIA REPUTATION.

Thus the *Hindu*, early in its eventful career, under the able and absolute guidance of G. Subramania Iyer, secured an all-India reputation. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* was the first to acquire it and next came the *Hindu*. In Calcutta, Bombay and Punjab there were in those days ardent admirers of the *Hindu*, who appreciated warmly the all-India National spirit which the

Hindu was assiduously trying to impress on the educated sons of the Motherland. Its level of thought soaring higher than all territorial, provincial, sectarian bias, appealed forcibly to Indian talent throughout India. Thus the war-cry of Travancore for Travancoreans, Mysore for Mysoreans, and Punjab for Punjabis, found the earliest echo in the *Hindu*. Similarly the claims of Mahommedans and any other class for their due share of recognition received the fullest countenance of G. Subramania Iyer. Therefore the Hyderabad of those days made its aspirations known through the *Hindu*. G. Subramania Iyer had the most cosmopolitan sympathies and he never wavered in his exposure even of men for whom he had the highest regard and who belonged to Madras, if they differed from him in higher aims. I may illustrate this. Dewan Ramiengar of Travancore was one of our ablest Madras administrators. But his leaning towards autocracy made the *Hindu* his wildest critic. Dewan Bahadur Ragoonatha Rao, who in certain respects was regarded as his 'Guru' and guide by G. Subramania Iyer, came in for severe condemnation when he publicly sympathised once with Sir Lepel Griffin, who as Agent to the Governor-General, expressed his horror of the aims of the National Congress. G. Subramania Iyer in the most spirited manner began his attack by attributing to Dewan Bahadur the following characteristic:—"When I ope my lips, let no dog bark". There was in G. Subramania Iyer the strong consciousness that the unification of India among other forces depended on the following factors:—

(1) The continued preservation in Indian States of Hindu and Mahommedan traditions and their value in the creation of reverence for past achievements.

(2) The existence in different parts of India of Hindu shrines which tended to unite Hindu India in the tie of common worship and considerations of common safety and greatness, independent of provincial, sectarian and inter-communal feuds and jealousies. Regarding the Hindu-Moslem problem, he would often point with pardonable pride to Hyderabad and Kashmir which then got on so well under Mahommedan and Hindu sovereigns respectively from time immemorial though their populations were in inverse ratio to the nationality of their rulers. The leaders of the Mahommedan community of those days in different parts of India and similarly the leaders of the enlightened and progressive Parsee and Indian Christian communities recognised a true friend of their struggles in the *Hindu* and its conductors.

It is by the recognition in practical everyday work of the very basic foundations of national requirements that G. Subramania Iyer built up the all-India reputation of his paper. What more convincing testimony can I cite for this than the simultaneous admiration of the *Hindu* of those difficult days by men so widely differing in nationality, profession, age, temperament, as Sasipada Banerji, Romesh Chunder Dutt, Mana Mohan Ghose and Motilal Ghose of Bengal, Justice Ranade, Dadabhai Nowroji, B. M. Malbari and Dinshaw Edulji Wacha (now Sir) of Bombay, Nam Joshi of Poona, Mudholkar (Rao Bahadur) of Berar, Pandit Madan Mohan

Malaviya of Allahabad and of other Indians whom I can quote. Many a newspaper started by Indians in those days, or even run by powerful Anglo-Indian syndicates, never acquired a standing name outside the Presidency or Province in which it was published. That is why I have dwelt so much on this particular aspect of the reputation of *The Hindu*.

SENSE OF FAIRNESS

G. Subramania Iyer was a very strict disciplinarian but he never minimised his own sense of responsibility. He did not in practical life ignore altogether the sacred maxim "Do unto others as you would be done by." He never minced matters when things went wrong as the direct result of human commissions. But he never took undue advantage of the errors and mistakes of his subordinates or fellow-workers, merely because he was in authority over them or could damn them in any manner that was easiest, a habit of mind so much prevalent among both officials and non-officials. Very rarely the man at the head of an office or concern puts to himself the question. "What would I have done if I were precisely in the position in which the erring man is found now." In spite of this balanced equilibrium of mind and conduct, he enjoyed an unenviable and unjust reputation in his palmy days for harshness and undue severity of judgment and action. This was due to his cautious and non-committal attitude in most matters and his stern sense of duty in pouncing on all—high and low—in purely public interests without any previous warn-

ing. His generally impersonal nature at times led him to meet his acquaintances with a smiling face in the morning or evening, and to shake hands heartily—while at noon he thundered vociferously in his columns, in the loudest tones against their public actions or views. They wondered how they could rely on him. They scarcely realised his unpleasant duties, and how as an Editor he could have no friend or foe in his public utterances except what he is inevitably led to in the light of their own doings. He held a high public trust. In its discharge, what counted most was public interest. If a friend had to be displeased, he could not help it. If a foe had to be appreciated he could not withhold from him his meed of praise. In fact you cannot all your life be patting on the back of certain individuals or kicking others, independent of what they do during the 24 hours of the live long day. Consequently even very high placed men at times felt that *The Hindu* had deserted them in the hour of their direst need. But they little sought after the reason in their own conduct. My intimate knowledge of his everyday life convinced me that he was one of the sanest and safest men to work with or under, in public affairs, provided we entertained a clear idea of what we expected from him and an equally clear idea of what he expected from us, both from the public point of view. Otherwise it would have been impossible for me to have worked under him for ten long years without a day's break and retained his unstinted good-will and implicit confidence all his life, long after I left him. I shall quote two very good

instances of his placing himself in my position and judging how far I was to blame. None of us should forget that humanity is not perfect and the best among us often tumble down in our work most woefully, whether we have the courage and candour to openly confess it or not, because otherwise it may cost our position or prospects.

DEAD MAN ALIVE

One day at about 3-30 noon, an educated Native Christian gentleman, holding then a responsible office in Madras, a familiar and trusted friend of G. Subramania Iyer and M. Veeraraghavachariar entered the office in great haste. I can from my room in upstairs hear his footsteps as he was ascending and his voice in loudly calling for Veeraraghavachariar before he had got over half the stair case, as Veeraraghavachariar was occupying the room nearest the door-way. Finding no response he almost ran into the Editor's room which was then situated at the end; finding the door locked he came to me. His face clearly indicated his disgust and disappointment at missing his friends. He had some precious secret to communicate forthwith and his sense of his own importance and dignity was slightly hurt when pure accident compelled him to resort to one like me second in command. It was quite natural and all of us feel similarly in such predicaments. He spoke to me as follows:—"Look here please. I am very sorry both Subramania Iyer and Veeraraghavachariar are away from the office just now. You can surely recognise me. I do not want *The Hindu* to lag behind its contem-

poraries in the publication of important news. You know Mr. White. He is one of our great national leaders. All his life he has done his best to befriend the Congress and to persuade the Anglo-Indian community as a body to throw in its lot with Indians. He is just dead. You must do full justice to the memory of this distinguished benefactor of India and the recognised head of the domiciled community. I am in a great hurry. I have to do so many things. I have not even gone to my office. I cannot stay here a second longer". So saying he walked out of my room a few steps and again retraced his steps as if he had forgotton some valuable thing of his own and said. "If you fail in your duty to-day *The Hindu* will lose a great deal in public estimation. You must rise equal to the occasion". I asked him on the spur of the moment "are you sure of your news?" He replied "I am just driving through Mr. White's residence. What more do you want?" It was nearly 4 o'clock when this harangue was over. What am I to do? I should act at once on the information so forcibly placed at my disposal. I am a believer in the seat intended for a work giving the occupant the necesssary inspiration. So I left my room, walked to that of Subramania Iyer, sat in his chair and wrote as good an obituary notice as I could, put it within a thick black border, in quite good old orthodox style, omitted some other important leading matter and put it in. Only I missed the first Mail and the paper was ready for the second Mail and the local delivery. I went home with the satisfaction of having discharged a solemn duty

to a good friend of India. Mr. White was known personally to all of us. We fully sympathised with him in all his far-sighted patriotism, though some of us had even then our doubts as to whether his community would ever follow in full his advice. The colony near the Bowringpet Railway Station, within the Mysore State, is named after him. Even the Madras Government of those days which was exceedingly jealous of any of its servants playing publicly with such a fierce fire as practical politics, regarded him as an amiable dreamer whom it was best to allow to play with his pet schemes without official frowns. He was ailing for some time and so the news of his demise did not come in as a surprise. The Cospomolitan Club is the great clearing house in the evenings for all political tidings of an exciting nature. There the best Indian talent regularly meets for recreation and exchange of views. Some of our friends when they read *The Hindu,* had full faith in it, some were sorry; some took it as just the inevitable decrees of Providence. A few of the younger spirits however were disappointed at not finding the news being confirmed by the other evening paper. G. Subramaniya and M. V. were glad at their Assistant being so diligent and resourceful. However, the next day at 12 noon when I was in office, G. Subramaniya sent for me. His habit was never to disturb himself or others between 12 and 3.

These were the busiest hours. So when I received his call, I thought instinctively that some great error had occurred and felt uneasy in mind. I went to him.

After adjusting his papers and letters, he calmly pulled out a letter from his capacious bundle, handed it over to me across the broad table and asked me in a serious tone and with suppressed anger, "How did this occur, please. I am so sorry I was away from office yesterday afternoon". I opened the letter and read it. To my utter consternation and inexpressible self-reproach it was a letter from Mr. White himself, bearing his well-identifiable signature, and the opening sentences ran in the following pleasant and awe-inspiring strain: "It is given to few or none in this world to have the pleasure of reading their own obituary notice. But it is mine to-day," etc., etc. The reader will now fully realise the awkwardness of the blunder I had so unwittingly committed. In hot Madras—there were then no electric fans—I began to perspire awfully. For the moment it occurred to me that I was almost dead. I had brought down the paper as low as one could do it. But we have to face all situations, however wretched, with patience, and I mustered courage in a minute and explained to him who my informant was and how I was led into it. He at once smiled and said, "It is all right. You are not at all to blame. I should have done precisely the same thing if I had been in office yesterday. Please give back the letter to me. We are all so glad Mr. White is in the land of the living. I shall write a para., contradicting the mistake. Don't you brood over this and make yourself unhappy." Immediately I felt greatly relieved, but for two or three days, I could not do my full work, nor take my normal quantity of

nourishment. The consciousness of a great blunder had to wear away gradually. Just at noon on that day the same officer came to G. Subramania and personally expressed his regret for having misled me. G. Subramania Iyer called me and M. V. into his room and gave a bit of his mind to the officer for his egregious folly, and asked him how he was up to it. The officer said that he was driving through the residence of Mr. White. He knew he was seriously ill. He thought he saw some signs of mourning and some preparation for the funeral. So he concluded, death had occurred, and without entering the Bungalow and making enquiries, he drove his dog-cart, as fast as he could, to have the obituary in time for the post! G. Subramania Iyer laughed outright and said to me, "Why do you feel for it yet. Here is our friend who compelled you to rise equal to the occasion. It is all his wonderful imagination and not your fault. There was hardly time for you to make enquiries or postpone taking action. If we cannot rely on such friends and on men of such enlightenment and sense of duty, we must at once close the paper. That is all." I withdrew, leaving the other three. To me it was some satisfaction that the friend had the Christian charity to exonerate me fully, but I cannot escape the oppressive fact, that if I had further cross-examined him or driven with him to Mr. White's residence at once leaving the office to itself, for a few minutes, I would have saved so glaring an error. Therefore I appreciated much the attitude of G. Subramania Iyer.

EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY

On another occasion G Subramania Iyer was absent for 3 or 4 days from Madras leaving instructions with me to be in charge, subject to my acting in accordance with advice which may be given by Mr. M. V. I assented. Either at Coimbatore or Madras or Mysore I found more often than not, I had to work under more than one master, at times receive contradictory orders impossible of execution and to make the best of the situation. This has been a singular characteristic of my long career both official and non-official. I never objected to it. I took it as a normal function of this world. This aspect has its counterpart in domestic life also. There also we have to consult the convenience and goodwill of so many, though we may proudly call ourselves the head of the family. The earlier we realise that this world is such a complex one, that in reality there is no absolute independence or free unfettered will, the better for our peace of mind. On that day during the absence of G. Subramania Iyer I was instructed by Mr. M. V., to deal with a subject of importance in a certain specified manner. An influential M. P. a great friend of India who was almost an annual visitor in those days, was personally interested in the subject. It was his ambition to send home every week a summary of genuine Indian opinion on his favourite subject of beneficient agitation. At 12 noon, I received the suggestion and along with it a G. O. containing a

review of the operations in that department for the latest official year. The Government of Madras—and I believe other Governments also—are at times in the bad habit of throwing on the devoted heads of editors G. O's. without sending in the same cover the Departmental Report on which the G. O. is based. This sorry divorce makes it impossible for us to verify how far the inferences drawn by the Government from the Report are correct and appropriate and what the bearings of the Report and the G. O. are on public interests. We can never take anything on trust even though the assertions bear the divine mark of Government. But the Government never take the trouble of understanding our requirements. They just despatch to us regularly what is most convenient. Clear instructions were given to me that my leading article should run on certain defined lines with a strength of language and expression appropriate to such an important visit and momentous occasion. It should appear that very evening as it would miss its object if delayed. My habit always was, whether it was a G.O. or a book or a question paper, to read it twice, first in a general glance, again to mark important portions and then at once to begin to write, again for a third time referring to the original. To my utter confusion I found that the materials contained in the G. O. led me irresistibly to the very opposite conclusion to that which I had been ordered to adopt. There was not the Departmental Report for varying the impression created by the G. O. Therefore only two alternatives were left to me before evening:

(*a*) to summarise the facts and figures in the G. O. as impartially as I can without any decisive concluding remarks of the nature of which I had been appraised beforehand or (*b*) not to write at all on the subject on that day. I chose the former course. The M. P. was in all anger. That was not what he required and eagerly was waiting for. His friend of the press who had authority over me, felt that I had almost betrayed him by disobeying wantonly his injunctions regarding the manner in which I had handled the subject. As soon as G. Subramania Iyer returned to the office, the matter was reported to him in all solemnity. He read the leading article. He sent for the G. O., read it. Then he remarked that none could have done better. The article had to be based on the G. O. and not on random oral wishes. He said to me that from that moment I need not receive any suggestions reeditorial work except from himself and if he were absent, I should look to myself for guidance. From my subsequent official career, I felt that few men in power could ever look in such a detached way when complaints are preferred. The official rule is when suggestions are made or advice is given, you must obey it however unjust or impractical it may be. So long as things go on smoothly, everything moves onward. But if mistakes occur, or if expressed desires are not given effect to, reprimands and admonitions and sermons—if nothing worse—should invariably be expected. The subject is never considered on its own merits. Prestige and Policy and what will please us are the main con-

siderations. With G. Subramania Iyer such a line of thought never prevailed. He asked himself. "What would I have done if I had to do that work." Therein lay his greatest virtue.

CHAPTER XIV

M. VEERARAGHAVACHARIAR

No recollections of *The Hindu* of the old days could ever be complete even partially, without a passing reference to this, one of the central figures. A graduate of more than average ability, a gentleman of extraordinary tact, almost always with a smiling countenance and always bent upon promising more than he can legitimately hope to accomplish, Mr. Veeraraghavachariar was one of the most accomplished *personagrata* in the world's theatre. He was a striking personality in several respects. When I entered *The Hindu* office, I was pleased very much to find both Messrs. G. Subramania Iyer and M. Veeraraghavachariar were intimate friends. Even two solitary souls, day and night thinking together purely for public interest, is a splendid and a very rare spectacle in this unfortunate and unhappy land of ours. At one time, I regarded it as one of the most hopeful auguries for the political future of our country. For early in life, I found in every part of the country, both the leaders and the followers were generally engaged in mutual recriminations. It has been the mournful fate of India for the past nearly 5,000 years to be torn asunder by internecine quarrels and communal feuds. If I were asked to put in the shortest phraseology the root cause of all

our disappointments and national degradation, I would most unhesitatingly sum it up thus. "Life-long discussion and never-ending divergence of views". My disillusionment in *The Hindu* office came very soon. When an apple of discord like practical Social Reform was thrown in the midst of the office, the pent up differences of opinion between the Editor and the Manager—both being proprietors of the concern—began to grow in intensity every day, and at times would find vent in bitter and vindictive abuse on each side. It was as clear to me as noonday light that God, in his unfathomable wisdom, takes delight in bringing together most incompatible temperaments. One was a rigid disciplinarian, spoke little and resolutely stuck to his plans. The other by his very nature and habit. talked a great deal, promised a great deal, and offered excuses for indefinitely long periods. One would sit for hours together like a wooden statute, intent on his own thoughts, with barely a word or two at odd and long intervals. The other extended to all, at all times, the right hand of welcome. The one was always chary of undertaking any responsibility. The other would eagerly saddle himself with all sorts of burdens on the mere mention of them and would not hesitate to say that he would try his best even to bring the sun and the moon down to the earth, if such a rosy picture would but gladden the heart of his friends. For he knew that by the very nature of the proposal, every one would see that his heart was full of the milk of human kindness, and that man's efforts were always limited by causes

beyond his control. It often struck me that each of these two lifelong friends had the defects and merits which the other had not. They formed a very useful counterpart. So long as the finances of the office were in a moderately manageable condition and so long as their individual and joint reputations shone brilliantly and without a stain on their names as the trusted tribunes of 35 millions of the people of the Madras Presidency, their fellowship and friendship did not suffer from their constitutional divergence of outlook. But when practical social reform assumed a place of the highest importance in the Editor's everyday public work, utterances and writings, and when their jointly owned paper became the mouthpiece for the incessant propagation of one set of extreme views, and when, what is more to the point, owing to a number of allied causes—the circulation began to decrease or in other words even if the circulation did not fall, it did not increase to the desired minimum level to bring into the office coffers the indispensable amount of money and outside efforts to get financial help, proved more abortive than successful, then the mutual differences of view—till then subsisting beneath the surface—assumed formidable proportions. Instead of quarrelling at distant intervals—angry talk and mutual distrust began to be visible at inconveniently short intervals. Mr. M. Veeraraghavachariar had great powers of organisation and conciliation. In this world to settle differences of others seems to be far more easy than to settle our own. I often wondered how these two eminent persons, who

were so well qualified to settle intercommunal and interprovincial disputes, were not able to compose satisfactorily their own cemparatively small personal equations. I was often grieved beyond expression, when I was called by both to arbitrate when words ran high between them, a colleague and subordinate could not be in a worse position than I often found myself on these occasions. It was only the most discreet silence on my part, without any leaning on either side, that enabled me to retain the good will of both. I knew each was at fault in some point or other. I also knew that each disliked to the utmost any mention of his own defect. I tried to pacify them both and appeal to the importance of the public work they were engaged in. At last, after separation, each would engage me for hours together to explain his own position and to justify the same. I went home usually on such occasions with the conviction that there was no use in attempting at any reconciliation, and only complete separation of interests and of work would compose their troubled souls and give each the peace of mind which both were so greatly in need of.

CHAPTER XV

THE SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENT

It was in the nineteenth century that the seeds were sown of India's intellectual awakening. All the public movements which engross so much of our attention to-day, political, social, religious or communal, had their birth and origin in some shape or other, in the last century. The direct and everyday contact of the highly material civilisation of the West, and its advancing scientific investigation, with the comparatively stagnant life of India, with its unshakable faith in its own Heavenly ordained destiny and its hoary, ancient traditions was bound to provoke startling developments and give birth to new aspirations and to a new outlook. The first fruits of this contact appeared in the most splendid colours in the horizon of Bengal, the population of which had been endowed by God with a wealth of intellect and emotion of a truly transcendental character. The first illustrious Patriot and Reformer of Modern India whose fame will shine eternally in Indian annals and whose laudable ambition it was to emancipate India from the social and political thraldom of ages and to raise it to a high plane of existence in every direction, appeared in Bengal in the personality of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. The Brahmo Samaj had convulsed all ranks of Bengali social and domestic life. It is true

it led to the formation of a new community drawn from the varied ranks of our innumerable castes and sects. It may also be conceded that, judged by mere numbers, it was at no time (and much less it is at the present day), a formidable rival to the mammoth organisation called the Hindu community. But its preachings for a generation or two on a large scale, accompanied by practical action, exercised a direct and an overwhelming influence on the improvement of the daily lives of the people of Bengal. Even Bombay and distant Madras did not fail to profit by it, however, indirectly; Keshab Chender Sen kept up the torch lighted by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Their less gifted successors of both the old and the new school did not spare all possible efforts to carry their message to all parts of India. The Arya Samaj had done similar work in the Punjab and parts of Northern India. The Indian National Congress led to the formation of the National Social Conference. The first musings of the Non-Brahmin movement were heard by me and my colleagues in Madras and the Southern Districts in the end of the last century. I have had discussions on this subject as soon as I entered the Hindu Office with austere Non-Brahmin intellectual athletes like the late Mr. Thillanayagam Pillai and Dewan Bahadur Rajarathna Mudaliar. An acute and even acrimonious controversy, whether political reform should precede or follow social and religious reform, was often carried on, on the platform and the press in all the Presidency towns, and high and low evinced a deep interest in it. In Bombay,

which has always stood solidly in the front ranks of even progress in all main lines, the Social Reform Movement was heralded by the celebration of marriages of high caste Hindu ladies whose first betrothal or marriage had proved unfortunate, and Bombay produced men and women whose bold actions and proved sincerity of purpose were more eloquent than rythmical and high sounding phrases uttered on the platform without being backed up by acts of self-sacrifice. The social upheaval was sustained and reinforced by the religious instinct developed by the Prarthana Samaj. The impulse was so powerful that even communities outside the pale of Hinduism were irresistibly and almost unconciously moved by the current surrounding them. Mr. B. M. Malabari, the renowned Parsi writer and benefactor of suffering humanity, threw himself heart and soul into the vortex of the Hindu Ranaissance agitation and if I mistake not, had bearded the Hindu lion in the shape of an ostentatious Maharaj—the divine, religious representative in this vile and wicked world of all that is heavenly—by exposing his iniquities and coming out unscathed in an exciting action for defamation. In the Northern Circars of the Madras Presidency, Pandit Veeresalingam had unfurled the banner of social progress and his silent, unobtrusive and effective way of educating the masses by appeals to them in their own vernacular, combined with fearless action, steadily for about half a century, has transformed the Andhradesa beyond recognition and has given his brothers and sisters a pre-eminence and daring in action

and expression, the rich fruits of which they are enjoying so well at the present day. In the South, Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao had early in life appeared in the highways and bylanes of discussion with his shastraic texts so as to suit the needs of the most convinced English educated Hindu sceptic and agnostic. Dewan Bahadur was unweary, in all his eventful and long span of life, in the annotation and exposition of ancient Sanskrit texts in favour of Social Reform. He held often conferences with renowned Pandits and more than once argued the subject in the presence of High Priests of sectarian orthodoxy, though he was aware that he could not convince his opponents. He was a model, in his own fashion, of a fearless preacher who brought to his work a most astonishing degree of personal courage and an utter contempt for all the obloquy, which his co-religionists of the orthodox camp, tried their best to cover him with. I yet remember how, when I was bathing in the banks of the Cauvery, at Kumbakonam as a student, two Brahmin Pandits, who had just then returned from a visit to Dewan Bahadur, were talking about him. One said and laughed loudly at his own witticism, "Dewan Bahadur is simply mad. We can never understand him or argue with him." I kept an open mind. Years after, when I made his acquaintance in Madras I wished God, in His infinite mercy, had made all the population of the Madras Presidency half as mad as Dewan Bahadur. He was ably assisted at times by Mr. Chentsal Rao, who, along with him, had early in life courted the isolation of

ostracism, known in popular parlance, as caste ex-communication. Great was the ferment caused in the Hindu society of South India. In a few cases the liberty allowed by modern jurisprudence and the British Indian Law Courts was fully availed of. In the Circars a practical reformer who had been subjected to the rigors of ex-communication and all the insensate talk which it leads to, brought an action for defamation against H is Holiness, the Swami of the community. The case at last reached its weary termination within the walls of the High Court of Judicature of Madras. So sedate, so conservative, and so towering a jurist as the Hon' Justice Sir T. Muthuswamy Iyer startled the entire Hindu community of all parts of India by his famous dictum that while His Holiness was within his rights as the religious head of the community in ex-communicating his offending disciples, the intimation of such ostracism should not be conveyed to the victim in a post card which may be readby persons unconnected with the particular community. The distinguished judge opined from his highest judicial seat that the bull of ex-communication should be made known only to those directly concerned in the affair. His Holiness had to pay the penalty and sustain himself with courage against adverse decree pronounced against him by man made law as against long enjoyed, almost divinely descended and till then unquestioned caste prerogative and sectarian supremacy. From that day till now their Holinesses in all parts of India and especiallay in the Madras Presidency have grown exceedingly wise and

tolerant and abandoned once and for all times the ancient habit of issuing written bulls of ex-communication and having them publicly read in large caste assemblies composed of all and sundry. Since then non-co-operating caste combinations are formed by personal talk and by messages sent by word of mouth, so as not to give a hold to the offended person to resort to legal remedies.

Thus the Indian atmosphere was full of the cry of social amelioration in diverse directions—and especially in regard to raising the status of Hindu women and removing the unspeakable sufferings to which they were at times by chance and custom subjected. Publicists and men who desired to come to prominence began to search their own hearts and to place themselves in the front ranks of the agitation. Mr. G. Subhramani naturally, by instinct as well as by education and by his sacred vocation, assumed early in life a predominating position of assertion and of offering advice. He was unsparing in his condemnation not merely of repression and autocracy on the part of the British Government but was equally vehement in his relentless denunciation of customs and traditions which could not be vindicated in the light of present day logic and which acted as so many heavy unbearable drags on the wheels of Indian progress and in the consolidation of the Hindu sects and castes. He belonged to the class of the most advanced Hindu social thinkers and advocates of reform.

REFLECTION AND LEADING.

What is the duty of an editor of a daily paper in India at the present day, that, of an Indian paper, in the true sense of the term without being contaminated or controlled by extraneous funds, or influences, or supervision ? Is it merely to furnish his readers with the latest news and satisfy their thirst after the everyday happenings in all parts of the world ? Or is it in addition to trumpet forth the utterances and actions of high placed officials or is it in addition to the above two functions also *to reflect public opinion*? What is the precise annotation of this much absued term? Or is it also in addition to the above three items *to lead public opinion* in wholesome channels, to suggest improvements, organise new forces, and to assume the high and distinguished role of a teacher and instructor of mankind, and in that capacity to exercise without fear and within the limits of the law of the land and subject to its penalty, the power of admonition and reprimand, of expostulation and protest, irrespective of all considerations save what he feels as the inevitable minimum in regard to the subject of everyday controversy? Opinions of even the best educated Indians and Englishmen have often differed widely in the answers to the above weighty questions. No two men agreed. Especially those interested or taking part in public movements argued the points, each in his own favour. If a speaker or writer was of the same view as the Editor, he applauded him to the skies. He had no objection to elevate the Editor (or those who write for

him) to the status of an uncrowned dictator with almost unlimited discretion. Those, however, who were personally and sincerely, as the result of their own reflection, study and experience, differed from the policy of the paper, protested vociferously against what they conceived to be an arbitrary exercise of editorial discretion. In their view the Editor should, like the President of the Legislative Assemblies or the Speaker of the House of Commons, simply guide the discussion, without any visible leanings of his own on either side. That is what they termed the reflection of public opinion. An Editor is a mere mirror which shows to you your own face, without calling it ugly or beautiful. G. Subramania Iyer, however, early in his day revolted against mere dissemination of news or the mere reflection of public opinion. He stoutly maintained and maintained it against the most powerful odds that it was one of the most sacred and one of the most solemn duties of an Indian Journalist of the present day to lead public opinion and to mould it on the lines best suited for the immediate needs of the country. Such an assumption was sure to bring in its train heavy responsibilities and to subject the journalist to the severest tests of scrutiny. All the discontented elements were waiting for an opportunity to test his sincerity and self-sacrifice when fitting opportunities offered themselves. When a journalist meekly expresses the views of other people without any sermons of his own and when he effectively ignores all their defects, he is a *persona grata* generally. But when he presumes to be wiser than the

wisest of his so called following, a presumption inevitably present in his attempt to lead others to accept his own view, he naturally exposes himself to the most virulent criticisms of the section whose predilections and interests are opposed to his policy.

PHYSICIAN HEAL THYSELF.

It is often said that the Gods are at times, if not always, very jealous of weak humanity given to boasting. So ancient and so famous a Prince like Harischandra had to undergo undreamt of trials because he had the audacity to resolve to adhere literally to truth. It was only the worst sufferings imaginable that could enable him at the end of his life, almost worn out by the loss of his Kingdom and the endless sufferings of those near and dear to him and his own unthinkable humiliation and degradation, to leave behind him an imperishable name synonymous with Truth. Lesser mortals have had since then their own share of suffering and trial whenever they presumed to boast or to lecture to others about their duties in this imperfect world. It was so with G. Subramania Iyer. It seemed to me then that the very Heavens wanted to test the sincerity of this unceasing advocate of Reforms—social, moral and political. His domestic life was for a time one of unclouded and unsurpassed happiness and contentment. His wife was a lady of saintly habits and patience, and devoted intensely to the home and the hearth. The husband and the wife were like models that could be envied. God had given them children whom they loved and cherished most as priceless treasures, as most Hindu

parents generally do. G. Subramania Iyer was thus building up a great and an abiding reputation for himself as a publicist and unfailing friend of Social Reform. At home he commanded that most enviable and the rarest of all blessings in this world—peace of mind and a family life to which he was devoted intensely, and in return for which he received the intense devotion of the members of his family. Therefore, no obstacles and no difficulties outside the home could disturb his mental equilibrium. He welcomed all opposition and he overcame, without violation of principles, all difficulties which obstructed his path almost daily. His outlook was bold and undaunted. National welfare was his highest aim. The secret and main spring of his success, next to his own high mental equipment, lay in his domestic bliss and in his unalterable will and his robust faith in human energy and human effort well-aimed and well-directed, with a strong back ground of conviction and integrity. At such a time the God of all nations, whose supreme power over life distinguishes Him from all earthly Potentates and Sovereigns, threw from above a bomb of trial which shattered to the dust his domestic bliss. The eldest and first-born daughter of G. Subramania Iyer, to whom both the father and the mother were most devoutly attached, who had been betrothed at the age of 11 or 12 lost her boy husband. She was, according to the most cruel customs of Hindu Society, classed among the child-widows. This term is a self-contradicting one. A child can neither be a widow nor a wife. In all other civilised parts of the globe, except

India, it is only *men and women* that are raised to the dignity of husband and wife or widower and widow. Children are wholly exempted from the ordeals and blessings associated with marital and conjugal relationship. But in India owing to causes which we need not now pause to enumerate, a quite different custom has been long prevalent. And even to-day after all the Herculean efforts of noble souls in all parts of India, it persists and the remedies adopted fall far short of the the evil so rampant. The Decennial Census Reports would suffice to justify the above remark. To a highly sensitive and intellectual mind like that of G. Subramania Iyer this stunning domestic misfortune was indeed almost a death-blow. From that moment his life underwent a change which was at every step clearly visible to me. The first stage was one of intense and unconsolable domestic sorrow and a feeling of despair, both for Mr. and Mrs. G. Subramania Iyer. The second was a keen tug-of-war between all the latent and active forces of orthodoxy on the one hand and of practical Social Reform on the other. G. Subramania Iyer had often expressed himself eloquently against the inhuman custom of consigning young female children to life-long suffering and humiliation for the mere accident of the death of the boy husband with whom the girl had never lived even a single day, while no such obligation rested on the shoulders of even septagenerian and octogenerian bipeds called males losing by death their wives. G. Subramania Iyer consequently felt that in his own family an event had occurred which called forth all the

sagacity, all the courage and all the humanity which were in him. His own innermost conscience impelled him to rebel against the present day shackles. The outside atmosphere surrounding him was one of the most conflicting kind. Even his dearest and nearest relatives and even his staunchest admirers hesitated to offer him any decisive advice. Most of them were in favour of not transgressing the present day social rules and traditions, however unjust they might appear to human intelligence.

They regarded such serious domestic misfortunes as punishments inflicted on us for our past *Karma* in our previous birth. Their honest view was it would be best to bear the present day troubles with that calm resignation which follows the conviction that our sufferings are ordained by a beneficent God and the mystery is beyond our human vision. They no doubt expressed compassion for the lot of such girls but there they stopped. The feelings of compassion did not drive them to seek a remedy. The so-called English educated few, whose life-long endeavour in most cases was mainly confined to official or professional predominance and who had acquired as a class a standing reputation for leading what was termed a double life, one inside the house and another out of its precincts, proudly pointed the finger of curiosity and interrogation at G. Subramania Iyer. They often enquired what he intended to do now that his own home had to be set in order. What is this great Indian patriot, this bold journalist bent on leading both his enlightened countrymen as

well as the unenlightened masses of the people to a higher social plane, what example is he going to set? Is it only against the British Government that his attacks are directed? Does he not tremble before his sectarian elders? Will the cause of Social Reform ever make any tangible progress if such leaders submit themselves to the dictates of unreasoning and inhuman orthodoxy and blind superstition? The few higher souls in all parts of British India who had devoted their whole lives to the study of social evils were sincerely of the opinion that the cause of Reform would gain immensely if men like G. Subramania Iyer took practical steps to vindicate their convictions. In the midst of this din and noise round him, G. Subramania Iyer was moved to his innermost depths. At last he resolved to prove to his own conscience and to the outside world that he was a man among men and that he was prepared to make the heavy sacrifice which his own preachings and convictions called him to undertake. He was prepared to take up the challenge offered both by the orthodox and the educated and to throw to the winds the counsel of cowardice and opportunism which the reasoned voice of caution offered at every turn. There was another class of highly educated and highly philosophical men who with all the wisdom they could command gravely held forth thus: "How many times are we going to marry our daughters? The first husband dies. You propose a remarriage. Suppose the misery becomes a recurring decimal. What are you going to do? And then, had not God in His very *make* introduced an irremediable

distinction, purely physical, in the composition of man and woman? How then can we place them on the same footing in such matters? So long as women's function as mothers of the race and as the protecting angels at home has to be guarded against all encroachment, till then, women's sphere and privileges cannot be the same as men's. Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao, on the other hand, held that according to the ancient divine teachings of the Vedas, remarriage of women and girls was as Shastraic as any other domestic religious function.

G. Subramania Iyer thought that arguments would never end in such matters. He quickly resolved to take the deepest plunge in the strong current of practical reform. One evening he came to me in the office and said "Will you drive with me now? I am not going to the Club. My heart is so full and heavy. I have to consult you in a most important matter". I readily assented. We had a long drive in the course of which he said that he had after all determined to marry his daughter a second time, and that he had selected what he thought might prove a satisfactory match. He then put me a direct and personal question.

"I know I cannot rely on our educated caste men nor on the masses. I am not living in a fool's paradise as to what my step would lead me into. As I am not going out of the community and as I have to lead in all other respects the purely Brahminical life in which we have been brought up for generations, I am in need of a working minority. Even a few staunch friends will

be a great relief to me. I believe you sympathise with the cause I have at heart. If you do, to what extent can I rely on you? I know you have a few intimate friends. They may also join us in keeping up the struggle. Among us each earning member means an entire family. Please speak out your mind. This is purely in the interests of Social Reform. Dismiss from your mind that we are officially in any way connected or you are under any obligation to me. I only want the consolation of ascertaining beforehand whether I can rely at least on two or three friends". The subject was not new to me. Myself, my friends and whole families were daily discussing the question. I had, long before G. Subramania Iyer put me the question, formed my own limits of action. I replied thus "I have thought over the subject. The fact of social ostracism by the community will make absolutely no difference in my social relations with you. If it comes to my ostracism on that account, I shall not turn my back. I cannot of course talk for others. But I have fair grounds to conclude that two or three friends of ours will also join us in this matter and make a firm stand". He said that was the only assurance required and that his mind had been unalterably made up. I asked him whether he had taken the opinion of the members of his own family and of his wife and ascertained their wishes. For I am always of the view that the most important element in matters of domestic reform, whether social or religious or socio-religious, is the home. Our first duty is to see how far we can carry along with us our own

dearest relatives or how we compose our internal and personal equations. G. Subramania Iyer replied that almost every day he had spent long hours in talking over the subject, but it was not possible for him to elicit any decisive answer from his people. He did not however expect any opposition to his scheme at home and at any rate he was sure of the passive acquiescence of the members of his own family leaving out of consideration those orthodox members who were not with him and at Madras.

MARRIAGE AT BOMBAY

Once having resolved on the scheme, he stuck to his plan. He thought the enlightenment of Bombay would furnish a better atmosphere than that of backward Madras. He was aware that he was a native of the most conservative and most orthodox centre of South India—the Tanjore District and he belonged to a sect which was at that time most exclusive and isolated in its marriage relations. The Bombay Congress at which the veteran friend of India, Charles Bradlaugh, was present, was one of the most inspiring. As a rule, G. Subramania Iyer was attending all the Congresses. He thought that along with attending the Congress he might also celebrate the marriage. He had taken the young man he had selected who was a member of the same community and his daughter to Bombay and there with the encouragement so heartily and so profusely offered by his eminent countrymen, his cherished and laudable ambition was realised. The papers were all in praise of his heroism.

THE AFTER EFFECTS.

After he returned to Madras and settled down for work he found out that all the encomiums so generously showered on him in public had not their counterpart in any of the facilities necessary to a peaceful life. The orthodox folks were silently but effectively up in arms for an open and life-long battle. The Brahmin servants and the priests who were till then freely resorting to his house for work and wages, would never pass by his house or if sent for would offer lame excuses. All would decline invitations without assigning any reason, leaving us to make our own inference. Every one of his community or of the other Brahmin communities who visited him, considered that he was doing an act of great condescension for which he expected a rich reward in money or in kind in the shape of a recommendation for finding some job. The bridegroom whom he had selected proved a real white elephant and his demands were rising in value every day. It was a great and momentous struggle in which he had engaged himself. His aim and that of a few others who threw in their lot with him was not to go outside the pale of the community or to seek conversion to other forms of faith but to establish the right of action as dictated by an enlightened conscience and the dictates of equity in some vital matters, in the hope that some day the microscopic minority of reformers would gradually attract to their fold increasing numbers till at last the particular reform for which we work becomes a part and parcel of Brahminic social and religious life. Time

alone can show whether this aim is possible of realisation. In the matter of sea voyage, I am glad this position has been actually and almost achieved. So also in regard to marriage after puberty of girls. Now-a-days no one raises any question at all in regard to the last subject and in regard to the former, the more the England returned men are inclined to be let alone and the more prosaic and formal according to old lines their every-day-life is fashioned, the easier it is for them to get on, in their old environments. But in the matter of the remarriage of women, this position has not yet been achieved. At the time G. Subramania Iyer set the example he had to bear the brunt of the opposition. All glory to him that he never wavered. He willingly bore all the exactions and humilations to which his changed social position subjected him.

CHAPTER XVI

THE REMARRIAGE MOVEMENT

The first remarriage with which my friends and myself identified ourselves I have referred to above. The second and the third in the series had a touch of romance in them.

One fine morning a public-spirited pleader of the Central Ceded Districts brought to Madras his foster sister a young Madhwa girl of about sixteen summers who had lost her boy husband years ago, and who had resolved to marry a second time. A young Brahmin of a different community who was employed in a neighbouring Province, had signified his willingness to redeem the girl from her lonely desolation. Our humble organisation, though it had to face a most formidable opposition, provided the necessary agency, as it had both a Newspaper and an Association behind it for propaganda and steady work from day to day. The bride took her lodgings for a few days with Mr. and Mrs. G. Subramania. We got permission to celebrate the marriage in a choultry in Mylapore in one of the main streets of the Tank Square. Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao, our Chief, acted as Priest for the occasion and had good professional lieutenants to back him up. To add as much *eclat* to the occasion

as possible, and to give it all the splendour of a grand domestic festivity, Dewan Bahadur brought with him his venerable wife and some of the young lady members of a distinguished Mahratta Brahmin family closely related to him. The whole ceremony went off very well before the traditional sacred fire, the ever awe inspiring witness of all our mundane contracts, ever incorruptible and above all earthly temptations. I am glad this marriage has proved a happy one. The husband and wife have lived these long years in perfect harmony and domestic felicity. They have had a number of children. One of the sons is a graduate of ability and is employed as a tutor in one of the celebrated colleges of a new born University.

PRECEPT AND PRACTICE

But there was a most disappointing incident in the Dewan Bahadur's refusal to honour us with his company and presence in the marriage dinner which had been arranged with scrupulous care in regard to all details to make it acceptable even to the most orthodox sectarian conservatism. When the hour for the dinner arrived, Dewan Bahadur walked out with all his family entourage. The admiring audience melt away like the butter placed in fierce sunlight. Till at last we, four or five, with a few daring Brahmin students of the Presidency and the Christian Colleges, were left behind. My friends and myself carried on an agitation over this, which was very fierce. Three of us wrote a letter to Dewan Bahadur requesting enlightenment and explanation for his glaring inconsistency between precept and

practice. The Dewan Bahadur with the inborn courage with which he had been endowed and which was characteristic of his eventful life, immediately replied to us stating that dinner was not a necessary adjunct of social reform and that he had all along abstained from accepting invitations even from intimate friends. In his view commensality was so insignificant that he wondered why any one should attach to it the least importance as a reforming force. We published the whole correspondence. From far and near, both Indian and Anglo-Indian newspapers, high and low, daily or weekly, were of only one opinion that Dewan Bahadur's view was not a correct one. Of all the criticisms thus pronounced, one, that of Mr. Malabari in the columns of "*The Indian Spectator*" was the most humorous. "Messrs. A. Subba Rao, K. Subba Rao and K. Natarajan will not allow the grass to grow under the feet of Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao" was the verdict of the Parsi Reformer. Dewan Bahadur, soon after, left Madras for a pretty long stay at Kumbakonam. Years after, I joined the Mysore service, I had to go to Kumbakonam and my first duty and a pleasant one was to wait on Dewan Bahadur. He accorded to me a most affectionate welcome, took me every day with him to the Porter Town Hall, showed me all his bulky correspondence. Our mutual esteem and regard never suffered from the bitter and rancorous public discussion, we had carried on in regard to the need of a Reform dinner. I even now admire this spirit of frequent fight in public regarding ideals and methods

without any diminution in the slightest degree in personal esteem and in personal attachment at subsequent meetings.

A REAL ROMANCE

The third remarriage had a strong element of real, undoubted romance about it. In about the year 1894 one evening before 5 P.M. I received from a friend in The *Andhra Prakasika* Office a slip requesting me to go there at once as a young lady and her guardian, a school-master, were waiting to have an interview with me. I wondered who it could be. I went there at 5-30 P.M. and what did I see in the upstairs in a room the door of which was partly shut, to avoid the curious gaze of the malignant male eye but a lovely, fully grown up, maiden of 17 or 18 sweet summers, scrupulously clean in humble attire, belonging to the Smartha orthodox Brahmin caste, with a keen sense of modesty, with eyes full of tears, looking at the bare floor, so as to fully avoid the face of those talking to her. In the centre hall near the room was the young school master of the same community, about 28 years of age, her guardian friend. The story as unfolded to me by both of them, perfectly accurate in every detail, was as follows: The young maiden was the daughter of an orthodox Shastri near Kumbakonam. The girl was married in her tenth year and within a year lost her husband. From that time her life was miserable. She was taunted as a widow and even the tender hearts of her parents did not show any signs of relaxation from the rigors which caste and communal traditions had long prescribed as

the routine course for such divine ordinance. However the girl was allowed to grow till her 18th year without any molestation. Then spurred on to action by the neighbours, the parents made attempts to disfigure her once for all so as to satisfy all orthodox protests and thus consign her for ever to life long solitude, humiliation and suffering. By nature she was bold far above her surroundings and years. She had a taste for Tamil literature and was reading at times "The *Swadesha-mitran*" and kindred newspapers. She learned therefrom that in Madras there was an organised attempt to encourage remarriage of women and therefore she left her home one morning without the knowledge or permission of her parents, and came to Madras all alone; and somehow found out by chance the whereabouts of one of her neighbours who was employed as a school-master in Madras. This gentleman with a truly fraternal sense of duty and charity took her to his home where his wife and parents were living. All of them welcomed her, but when they heard of her resolve, all of them except the school-master, were truly horrified. The young man found himself in a very awkward plight. How to dispose of such a pitiable case occupied all his thoughts and made him exceedingly anxious. So he sought an interview with me. I tried my best to persuade the maiden to return to her parents and to abide by the parental discretion. But no, she said she would rather die than remain single. She said to me "Push me, if you please into the Bay of Bengal and drown me there once for

all". That was her ultimatum. I requested the guardian to keep her for 2 days longer with him and to wire to the father of the girl. Immediately I carried the message to Messrs. A. Subba Rao, K. Natarajan and G. Subramania Iyer. The father of the girl arrived in hot haste. The interview between the father and the daughter in our presence was a most pathetic and pitiable one. The father would not consent to take his daughter with him, unless she conformed in full to all his instructions according to the canons of approved orthodoxy in every detail of life. The daughter said she would rather die than obey such an unreasonable injunction. The father went back without the daughter in extreme sorrow and anguish with whatever solace he could find in the thought that he had even at such a great sacrifice, maintained untarnished his title to the sufferance, if not esteem, of his orthodox relatives and of the community of which he was a prominent member. The daughter with that womanly instinct which grows in the female heart with the advancing maidenhood, relied on God for giving her a good partner in life and consented to take leave for ever of her parental roof. Thus were torn asunder the father and the daughter. The sacred responsibility of taking care of this maiden and finding her a good husband fell on the Reform party. Even humanitarian considerations and reform zeal could not ignore the law of the land. Our first duty was to see that we did not make ourselves liable to be pursued by any one in law courts for having befriended such a good cause. There was our valued

friend and unfailing Doctor in the person of Mr. C. B. Rama Row, then attached to the Madras Medical College, who by mere sight, certified to the age of the girl. Mr. and Mrs. Natarajan treated her as their own beloved daughter, took her home and attended to her comforts far more than her own parents could ever do. In our search for a good bridegroom for her and in response to our enquiries and advertisements we came across several bogus candidates who demanded large dowry, or who desired to interview her. We guarded her effectively from all encroachments and pitied the arrogant and impudent overtures shamefacedly made by one or two educated young men. Till at last one candidate a widower, a school-master, belonging to a high class Desistha Brahmin family, with high credentials from a distinguished Reformer, was accepted. The marriage came off in Pursuwalkam at the temporary residence of Pundit Veerasalingam. It is to this marriage that the late Sir N. G. Chandavarkar refers in his letter to me dated Sept. 1894. Dr. Subramania Iyer was one of those who sent a small present on the occasion for the bride, as a token of his approval of the movement with a letter full of sympathy. This marriage, however, did not, in the long run, prove as happy and as fruitful as the one to which I have referred above as immediately preceding it, due mainly to the defects in temper and other respects of the bridegroom whom the girl was fated to choose after such heroic effort and determination.

The direct result of my active participation in the above matrimonial alliance was of a most unexpected nature. In the end of December 1894 I had gone to Arkonam to meet Justice Ranade and Dr. Bhandarkar and to welcome them to Madras for the National Social Conference. On my return to my home in Triplicane, I was surprised to find my Brahmin servants had silently absconded from their routine work. On enquiries I found that it was due to some secret understanding arrived at the sectarian sabha which met usually at a sacred station. I was till then an ardent advocate of this communal organisation. When however this organisation lent itself to interference in Social Reform matters, I turned my back upon it with the usual impotent Brahmin curse on its future and its main-springs. On further enquiries I learnt to my surprise that the bridegroom was a close relative of the chief leading spirit of the sectarian sabha and when I interfered with what he thought was his own citadel of conservative force, the apparent indifference and toleration till then shown to my Reform fervour was at an end. His wrath found vent in the order which he suggested and which was given effect to. The ordeal of excommunication is by no means an insuperable one. I wired to a friend at Bangalore for a cook. Friends and relatives by tens resorted to my house and even when I had no cook, they would not go elsewhere. We are living on the whole in an enlightened age when character and courage count for something and even the blindest orthodox frenzy could not drive us to despair and

dismay. At this stage of my story I desire to add a word of praise to the late Mr. Hari Rao, B.A., who was for a long time District Registrar of Madras. A descendant of a noble and highly elevated Brahmin family, a gentleman of sincere orthodox scruples and observances, one who spent liberally in sectarian doles and charities, he had such high regard both for G. Subramania Iyer and myself and my friends that he used to meet me often and assure me of his sincere regard for me. He was an important member of the Madhwa Desistha community. While other gentlemen who had been caught in the communal organisation of boycott had scruples about inviting those who accepted my invitation, he boldly refused to abide by such an understanding and as a rule whenever a "Vaideeka" friend took his lodging with me, he specially invited him, showed him in full the customary respect and assured me through his guest of his esteem for me. In those dark and dreary hours with difficulties and disappointments on all sides Mr. Hari Rao's friendly attitude and appreciation—especially in view of his unbending orthodoxy was a source of great encouragement to me and the members of my family. My friend, A. Subba Rao, early in our campaign, was made to feel for his courageous identification of interests with the Reform Party. The following letter of his would make the position clear.

New Town, Cuddalore,

14*th June*, 1891.

"My dear friend,

The crisis is after all come. The Madhwas are here raising difficulty about joining us A Taluq Gumastah here is the cause of the mischief All people here wish to keep away from my house. The inevitable is come. Of course, I am not going to recede, come what may. I want you to do one favour for me; I want a Madhwa priest to minister at the ceremonies. You must at once see Dewan Bahadur and ask him to place the services of his priest at my disposal for the occasion. I belong to Rig Veda. I want the priest to be in readiness so that he may join us should any emergency arise. I may require a Madhwa cook too. If he likes he need not eat in my house. He must be a clever man able to prepare good sweets. The fiat has not gone forth as yet. Secret meetings are everywhere held Please reply by return post. We can't do without a priest and a cook. If we have both, we can defy the ignoramuses here. I shall do my best to get them here. I just hit upon a plan. I shall keep myself from the rest of the family. What can they do then?

Yours affectionately,

A. S. R."

I was not able to procure either the cook or the priest at Madras. A. S. R. was able to get both at Cuddalore. I went from Madras for a day. I had some orthodox relatives at Cuddalore, whom then I left alone. I found early in our struggles that the less anxious we were to invite others or accept the invitation of others, the more easy it was to surmount all obstacles on such occasions.

CHAPTER XVII

ATTITUDE OF THE *HINDU* IN REGARD TO SOCIAL REFORM

Mr. Manmohan Ghose was one of the most gifted Barristers of Bengal. He was a patriot of a most distinguished type. His zeal in Congress work was unflagging. Personally he had achieved a lasting success against all caste barriers by walking across the border and joining the Brahmo Samaj. So Social Reform had no personal charm for him apart from its intrinsic merits for the upliftment of the nation. Naturally he might be expected to plead strongly in favour of social emancipation and to place it in the forefront of all reforms. But no, his political instinct soared far higher than the vision of his compatriots. Discussing the question whether the Congress was right in fighting shy of all social questions and confining its activities rigidly to grievances against the Government, Mr. Manmohan Ghose spoke as follows on a public occasion.

"I refer to the charge so often repeated that the National Congress, as a body is opposed to social reforms. Such an accusation is based on an entire misapprehension of the scope and functions of the National Congress, whose object is to point out to the Government what we conceive to be the defects in the administration of the country and to ask only for such

reforms as we are ourselves absolutely incapable of introducing without the aid of the Government. Now, the many questions of Social Reform, which are at present engaging the attention of the educated classes throughout India, are questions, the solution of which is entirely in the hands of the people themselves. It is open to all of us to live as we like, or to eschew or alter at any time any custom which we may consider inconvenient or mischievous. The remedy being entirely in our hands, we can apply it whenever we choose. Besides, it should be borne in mind that the Congress is composed of diverse communities, each having its religion and its peculiar usages, and it would be impossible for such a body to discuss the Social customs of a particular community, based as they often are, upon religious ideas, regarding which the members of another community, professing a different religion, have no adequate knowledge or information." The *Hindu* in a leading article, commenting on the above on January 14, 1891, wrote thus: "By giving prominence to certain social problems, it (the Congress) would run no risk of narrowing its national character. It would not repel politicians and it would attract many who are not primarily politicians. It would incur no decrease in the consideration shown to its opinions either here or in England. On the contrary, it would supply an additional guarantee of the genuineness of its aims ; and no one who has followed Mr. Malabari's success can doubt that its acceptance in England as a political factor in India, would be furthered. The question, however as to

whether a National Congress should interest itself in social progress is not entirely a question of convenience. It is one that will ultimately have to be decided on grounds of moral duty and historical necessity ; and the time for the decision cannot be far distant ".

As a sample of a more biting and a more severe criticism, the following quotation may be useful:—

" It is comparatively easy to demolish the Anglo-Indian Government and ask our rulers to carry on the administration on the lines suggested by them. The responsibility of working the change is not theirs, and the task of political reform, so far as the Congress leaders are concerned, is attended with little difficulty. Not so the task of social reform. The burden of giving effect to the alterations that we might suggest is ours. The foreign rulers have nothing to do with them. The social reformer has therefore a more serious and difficult contest before him than the political reformer. If it is this increased responsibility that scares educated men away from social problems, they will hardly receive credit for courage. Still it is difficult to explain on any other supposition the attitude of such sober politicians as Mr. Manmohan Ghose. The necessity for the departure first strikes educated men and adopting it boldly they compel the rest to follow them. This is the privilege and the responsibility which educated intelligence confers on the few as distinguished from the many. But this privilege and this responsibility Mr. Ghose would recognise only in political changes. India is the happy country where society allows each

individual to follow or eschew any custom. If a Hindu wishes to cross the sea, the caste interposes no obstacles. If a Hindu wishes to marry his daughter after puberty, his relations applaud his wish, and if a virgin widow tries to marry a second time, her neighbours place every possible facility in her way. Mr. Ghose must have fancied himself in transcendental regions, a very Utopia of his creation."

CHAPTER XVIII

"THE INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER"

If a great confidence has to be publicly acknowledged for it is no longer necessary, after the lapse of such a long interval to conceal it from public view, I may state that Mr. M. Veeraraghavachariar was in a sense the direct and the immediate cause of the birth in the journalistic fraternity of that promising and unique child, *"The Indian Social Reformer"*. One day he called me aside and for about two hours explained to me the difficulties he had to contend in the management of *"The Hindu"*. While he was found fault with by G. Subramania Iyer for the financial embarrassment in which they found themselves often, Veeraraghavachariar explained it was a great deal due to the changed policy of the Editor and he put it to me plainly that by my throwing in my lot with him completely, I had strengthened the hands of G. Subramania Iyer and weakened his own. He wanted an assurance from me and my friends that we would not utilise the columns of *"The Hindu"* almost exclusively—in his view—to the propagation of our pet theories and he appealed to me in all earnestness to save him from the apprehension he had strongly entertained, that if we were more amenable to him the concern would improve and he would command more peace of mind. I at once assented and had a sleepless night. I confided in two or three friends

the late Messrs. A. Subba Rao, B.A. and C. R. Chakravarthi Iyengar, B.A., Assistant Professor of History and Mathametics respectively of the Presidency College, and they fell in with my view that a separate weekly paper, solely devoted to social and moral reforms, should be immediately started. We drew up the prospectus. G. Subramania Iyer revised it. We issued it depending purely on public support. We agreed to work on the staff without any remuneration. We had not any large or small funds of our own to bear the cost of the upkeep. We were not mistaken in our hope that if our labours were given free of cost, the public would undertake the cost of maintaining the paper.

MR. K. NATARAJAN

Mr. K. Natarajan, then one of the rising stars in the public life of Madras, joined us almost immediately. Mr. Chakravarthi Iyengar gradually dropped from the concern. We formed a triumvirate and it was our policy not to publish any matter in our special paper which did not elicit the unanimous approval of all of us. Early in life we had learnt the valuable lesson of never carrying on a work on the basis merely of a majority. We were exceedingly apprehensive of forcing our views on a minority. In this triumvirate of ours which met usually at night between 8 and 11 or 12, every word which was not unanimously approved by all of us, was entirely scored out, mercilessly. By the courtesy and kindness of my friends, I was put up as the Editor of the paper, so far as the public announcement was concerned. But they laboured more than I ever could.

Mr. Natarajan has all along borne the burden of editing this journal—all these years. After my departure from Madras he carried the paper with him to Bombay and but for his undaunted courage and his unflagging perseverance, this exceedingly useful and this most sprightly journal would not have been in existence to-day. I do not discount the supreme value of the aid he has so continuously received from his distinguished friends in Bombay. But his is the greatest responsibility and it is his wonderful brain that has kept alive the journal so long. It is not only as an Editor that he stands unsurpassed but as a practical Social Reformer who has sacrificed all that is valuable in this world at the high and sacred altar of his cherished convictions and preachings, he stands at a height and at a pinnacle, which has been attained and has been sustained so satisfactorily by only a few within the range of my personal acquaintances. G. Subramania Iyer when he handed over to me for the first time the manuscripts—both prose and poetry—of Mr. Natarajan as soon as he emerged from the college—said to me, "Please read this. How fine it is. I have no doubt one of these days this young friend of ours will be one of the most brilliant writers of our time and generation." When I glanced through the pages, the handwriting was so good, so elegant, and the language and the sentiments so chaste, that none of us dared to interfere with it. G. Subramania's prediction has come true. The Tanjore District which has been so prolific in the production of eminent Indians, has the proud distinction of owning Mr. Natarajan also.

CHAPTER XIX

SOCIAL REFORM ACTIVITIES

As soon as we started "*The Indian Social Reformer*", we felt the need of an Association for propagandistic work and started one. Mr. Varadachariar, a Translator in the Madras High Court, was one of the Secretaries. He was a courageous and enlightened friend and hospitable to a fault. He devoted himself entirely to the Association and the details connected with the management. The other moving spirits were A. Subba Rao, Mr. K. Natarajan, Mr. O. Kandasami Chettiar (now Dewan Bahadur), G. Parameswaram Pillai, R. Chakravarthi Iyengar and Somasundaram Pillai. Dr. C. B. Rama Rao was a strong pillar of support and I am glad he has developed into a practical Social Reformer of a very noble type. His foreign training, his long professional eminence, his generous qualities and his unflagging zeal, in giving gratuitous medical help, whenever needed, have won for him a large circle of admirers. Even now he is in the front rank of all philanthropic work and in matters concerning the health of the nation and infant welfare, his labours are much appreciated.

ENLIGHTENMENT OF WOMEN

Simultaneously with starting the paper and the Association my friends thought that some special

measures should be set on foot for the practical enlightenment of the Hindu women. We started a special lecturing scheme confined to ladies. The lecturer may be any distinguished gentleman. But the audience was solely confined to the members of the fair sex. Once the idea of taking a number of ladies to the Senate House to witness the Convocation occurred to us. I called on the Registrar—it was Dr. Wilson if I remember aright. He approved of the idea, gave us all necessary help and reserved the gallery in a part of the upstairs to the ladies, as soon as the procession headed by H. E. the Governor, the Chancellor, descended from the stair-case. Another time the Meteorological and Astronomical Observer of Government, Dr. Smyth, I believe, gave us special facilities to take a batch of 15 or 20 Hindu ladies to his Laboratory at night and explained to us all the interesting features of the observatory.

CHAPTER XX

RAO BAHADUR M. RANGACHARIAR, M.A.

One of the most notable figures I came across while in Madras, was that of the gentleman, whose name adorns the headline of this chapter. A distinguished educationist, a professor of Science, Literature and Sanskrit, he was indeed a striking personality. Almost always sedate, calm and serene, he carried with him a dignified appearance. His pronunciation was splendid, the words flowed in easy rhythmical cadence, he laid peculiar emphasis on words of his own choice and it was merely delightful to hear him talk in private. G. Subramania Iyer had indeed a high regard for him, and while Mr. Rangachariar was Professor of the Rajahmundry College, G. Subramania Iyer introduced him to me as one of our talented Indians who took a passionate interest in National welfare, and what was rare among the general run of men in the Educational Department, took a living interest in the broader political and social activities engaging the attention of the public. When Mr. Rangachariar was subsequently transferred to Madras, he had among other forces in his favour the devotion and attachment of Mr. Alasingaperumal, B.A. of the Pachaiappa's College. His was a notable soul which worked unselfishly for all national interests. A devout follower of Swami Vivekananda, Mr. Alasingaperumal

was everywhere. His interest in Mysore Politics was indeed great as both he and his brother-in-law originally came from Mandya of the Mysore District. Mr. Alasingaperumal exercised a most beneficent influence on society. Mr. Rangachariar was a strong but discriminating supporter of Hindu Orthodoxy, and unfortunately he was generally found in the camp hostile to the young and enthusiastic Social Reform party of Madras. As the Editor of the '*Indian Social Reformer*', I used to get a great deal of encomium and at times very severe reprimands. I welcomed both with equal warmth. It was my settled policy after doing my duty, humble as it was, with all the vigour I could command, never to take offence at those who differed from me and never again to be drawn into a fresh controversy about past incidents. I had such high regard for Mr. Rangachariar that one of his spirited protests I have treasured up as a valuable momento for the past many years. Now I give it in original to his pupils and admirers:—

"Teeds Gardens,"
Perambore, 5th February, 1894.

"Dear Sir,

I send you herewith a copy of a lecture of mine on the "Function of Religion in Social Evolution" to be reviewed in the columns of '*The Indian Social Reformer.*' Whether we agree or not in our views as to the ways and means to be adopted in bringing about the social regeneration of the country I am sure you will see that my views I hold sincerely, and act up to my best light. If you differ from me I wish you to give a consistent

and organic criticism of the whole lecture. Nobody gains anything really valuable by pulling out bits here and there from the carefully thoughtout and written expression of opinions of people, and casting those bits with ridicule or laughter into regions from which according to journalistic judgment of a sort there can be no deliverance. I am honest and earnest in my views and naturally object to be handled in a light and undignified fashion. I need not tell you why I have written like this, in this note.

Yours with sincere regards,
M. Rangachariar."

Mr. Rangachariar dwells on journalistic proprieties. I do not now feel called upon to contest the position he has taken up. Further my esteem for this departed friend is so great that I would not attempt now to minimise the significance or importance of his spirited protest against the journalistic fashions of those days.

CHAPTER XXI

THE AGE OF CONSENT ACT

With regard to the extremely small measure of so called Social Reform in raising the age of consent to twelve, there was a formidable opposition even in so sensible a Presidency as Madras, and the opposition was led mainly by some of our men of the highest education and great social and political eminence. This was the sorry side of our public life. So progressive and so talented a statesman like Raja Sir. T. Madhava Rao, who had years before waited on Lord Dufferin with a memorial to raise the age of betrothal of marriage, among high caste Hindus to ten by force of law, in the evening of his distinguished public career, joined the opposition and called forth a public meeting at the Pachayappa's College, to pass a resolution of protest and to forward it to the Government of India. The handful of Social Reformers mustered strong, headed by the invulnerable Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao. Mr. Somasundaram Chettiar, one of our ardent and most esteemed public men of those days, who frequently presided over public meetings, was persuaded to guide the deliberations of the public meeting. The Hall was full. The venerable statesman who had ruled over three Indian States, stepped forward slowly, pulled out his bundle of manuscripts, and began to read

his speech against the proposed measure. Dewan Bahadur was enraged beyond measure and was waiting only for an opportunity to burst out openly in opposition and destroy all vestiges of support for the proposition. The Raja Sahib, instead of being content with formal objections, once strayed into personalities and referring to Dewan Bahadur, said some such words as "The anti-deluvian nebulosities of the Vedas". At this description, Dewan Bahadur rose up and began to strike the wooden pavement with his heavy walking stick. A few others followed him. In short, the whole hall was full of loud uproar. The Raja sank into his chair, no longer being able to stand his cousin's insults. The chairman was anxious to dissolve the meeting. Mr. M. Veeraraghavachariar took this opportunity for ascending on a chair and delivering a speech on an altogether unconnected subject, *viz.*, the Salt Tax and the Forest laws and the grievances of the people under these heads, with a view to restore order. The Raja was perplexed beyond expression at Veeraraghavachariar's speech and was mortally afraid of being misrepresented in the public press of calling forth a public meeting under his auspices for protesting against the iniquities of Salt Tax and Forest Policy. Messrs. P. Subramaniam, Attorney-at-Law, and Sundara Sastry, High Court Vakil (the much esteemed father of Justice Sir Kumaraswami Sastri) lifted up the Raja in their arms as it were, and forcing their way out of the crowd, brought him down to his carriage and sent him home. The meeting broke up without heads being broken and only a few chairs and benches being

thrown out of their places. Telegrams flashed forth all over India that the public meeting to protest against so beneficient and much-needed legislation had been broken up by the force of those in favour of the Act. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao never afterwards ascended a public platform. That was his last exit from all public meetings.

CHAPTER XXII

THE ANTI-NAUTCH MOVEMENT

One of the exciting victories of the Madras Social Reform Association, early in its life, was the campaign it carried successfully in awakening the conscience of the public to the enormities of the system of Nautch as it then existed. The handful of us who stood in the front ranks of the agitation came in for a great deal of opprobrium and ridicule. For the ardent lovers of the Nautch system, no abuse was vile enough, no vindictive terms strong enough for application against us and our Association. We were charged with the high crime of attempting to kill the fine arts of music and dancing. We were depicted as too impotent to appreciate feminine charms associated with a free life of untrammelled license. Even the most educated and highly placed men shrugged their shoulders at our (in their opinion scandalous also) unpatriotic diversion of public movements to so sordid a matter and our attention was called to the Divorce Courts of Europe and to their theatres and dancing saloons. Leaders of reactionary Indian thought in a truly saintly spirit and with that spark of divine compassion which pities the follies of erring humanity, informed us that there should be a recognised outlet for human passions and that otherwise family life in the Hindu social strata would be

placed amidst unthinkable and unutterable dangers. But we heeded not. No Indian of position and status, not identified with the Association, could be found in all Madras to preside over the public meeting proposed to be held by us to start the agitation. We turned to the mighty Dr. Miller, the esteemed and revered Principal and custodian of the Christian College. He was brave enough to accede to our request and under his awe inspiring presence, we carried the day against enormous odds due mainly to the qualms of conscience which our opponents felt in openly protesting against our propositions in a public meeting. They wanted to kill it by standing sullenly aloof from all participation in our activities. But the movement caught on very finely. How well and with what remarkable results, the following anecdote will amply illustrate. After I entered the Mysore service and when I had bid a sorrowful adieu to both the Press and the Platform and willingly subsided into the lower ranks of officialdom, the reverberations of the movement in leading which I had to take a very humble part and the personal animosities which it had roused, were made boisterously audible to me. In those days and even in the two administrations which succeeded Sir K. Seshadri Iyer's a notable feature was the morning and evening unofficial informal Durbars, held in the palatial residences of the Dewan and his ambitious colleagues vying with one another in the exercise of power and patronage. It was an unwritten but well recognised rule of official life that all aspirants to preferment and

all office holders anxious to retain their positions and influence with those at the helm of state affairs, should attend these Durbars and play whatever part may fall to their lot, either by way of reporting real or imaginary news, answering questions put to them or by merely walking and waiting in the compound with the singular satisfaction of having impressed the Dewan or Councillors with their own attendance.

At times even while high and low were very regular in their morning or evening attendance, they were used to be asked why they had made themselves so scarce ! It was Pradhan Siromani T. Ananda Rao, B.A., C.I.E., who abolished this system completely as soon as he assumed charge of Dewanship.

On one evening, four of us were walking from the Kumara Park, down the narrow road leading to Patan Bhavan. Three of the company were some of the highest officers of the State. My rule is never to mention names in making unfavourable comments so far as possible. Therefore I shall call the three of my eminent countrymen who preceded me X, Y and Z. The following conversation well brings out the *pros* and *cons* of the Anti-Nautch movement :

X. "Of all the mad agitations of the Madras Social Reform Association, the most insane is this anti-Nautch movement. I can never understand why these boy agitators are so much against the divine arts of singing and dancing".

Y. "Either they are fools who do not realise our spiritual, artistic and social needs or knaves who assume

a cloak of false piety merely for the sake of notoriety and cover all their sins in secret in such public manifestations of pretended horror against Nautch girls".

Z. "One of these agitators—in fact one of the prime movers in the Madras theatre is now following us—why not we ask him either to justify his position or express repentance and perform *Prayaschittam* for the part he has taken. I have been curious to get at the bottom of this agitation. What troubles me is that this agitation started in Madras years ago has now extended to peaceful Mysore. Friends of mine who never celebrated a domestic festivity without singing and dancing, are now mortally afraid of inviting a dancing girl to their house for fear of being publicly held to ridicule by the Madras and the Mysore Press. This sort of terror should be once for all done away with."

X. Turning to me with a smiling face ; "Here is your opportunity. Either convince us or express penitence on your own behalf and on behalf of your equally erring friends of Madras."

I felt all the while as if I was on fire and wanted to jump out of the flames. I was wholly oblivious of all considerations of official prudence and official advancement for the moment and thought that it was my supreme duty to vindicate the position of my party, and I gave the following reply :

"No one ever objects to music and dancing. It is the common knowledge that the charming personality of the heroine who sings and dances away her modesty in your presence is available for filthy lucre that vitiates

the whole Nautch movement. If music and dancing were dissociated from this evil traffic, then these arts will be restored to their pristine glory. If music and dancing as they exist to day are good for the dancing girl and if eminent and cultured gentleman of your position take a real and genuine delight in sitting at the feet of dancing girls, why not we all advise our wives, sisters and daughters to imitate the fashions of the dancing girl ? What is good for the daughters of others must be good to our own daughters. But many of us lock up our dear ones in our rooms, we are not willing yet to introduce our wives even to our most intimate friends, and at times we even imitate the old purdah system of drawing a thin veil over the carriage window to screen our ladies from the vulgar gaze of the public while driving in carriages. Yet you take a delight in asking other young women to sing and dance before you ! The great root principle of democracy is ; " Never ask another man's son or daughter to do anything which you will not allow your own son or daughter to do." As to any reference to the West, there is no need for us to compete in vice with other nations. One evil does not justify another. As regards a safety-valve I know how these safety-valves have proved the ruin of families and tarnished for generations the fairest of reputations beyond all possibility of reparation."

X, Y and Z were all up in anger.

X. " What to say to such people ?"

Y. "Why, it is very fine. It is a personal attack on ourselves that he is indulging in. It is such impudence that public are afraid of."

Z. "It is a fine invitation to all of us to imitate in our homes the dancing girl system. Is this all the reply to our request?"

I thought I had roused their worst passions, and being afraid of any longer following them, I silently walked away straight to my house. I was glad that subsequently all of them had the magnanimity of never showing any displeasure for this brutal attack on my part; they respected my sentiments and never invited me on such occasions. Straight talk on public matters is not without effect, though for the time being it may be unpleasant.

CHAPTER XXIII

JUSTICE MAHADEV GOVIND RANADE.

M.A., LL.B., C.I.E.

The longer we recede from the date of demise of this one of the most brilliant gems of humanity, produced by Mother India in the Victorian age, the nobler shines his qualities of head and heart. His exalted office sat but lightly on him and he never neglected his civic and citizenship duties, of a most arduous nature, while engaged in dispensing justice and equity from the highest court in the Presidency. In my humble opinion none of the various High Courts in all parts of India have given us such an example of devotion to the country's larger interests while in active harness. The second noteworthy feature of Ranade, as I was able to perceive it, was his exceedingly pacific disposition—pacific at times to a fault. He was always after compromise and peaceful progress. In this pursuit he often ascended to great heights of unpopularity and willingly submitted himself to all the sneers and taunts so incessantly levelled against his heroic self. Thirdly he showed a farsighted patriotism transcending that of the most of his compatriots in the care he bestowed in training some of his ardent disciples to a pitch of excellence from which they were able to serve their country in a most remarkable way. His interest in all kinds of human affairs was so intense and unceasing, that he was often the arbiter in various

local matters and his advice was eagerly sought after by princes and people. His broad cosmopolitan sympathies made him, the revered Guru of various castes—Parsees, Hindus, Christians, merchant princes, politicians and students. Even advanced thinkers like A. O. Hume, Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Telang and Dr. Bhandarkar, though each of them held strong views on special subjects, had a high regard for Ranade. His accessibility was another treasure. No one who wanted to see him had any difficulty. Civic affairs of Poona and Bombay interested him most and the petitions and representations he drafted or revised or suggested, from time to time and his public speeches and writings contributed a great deal to the building up of several local institutions and the development of that national sentiment and solidarity which is a conspicuous trait of Maharashtra and of Bombay. One of the leading Anglo-Indian daily newspapers of Bombay wrote thus on the morrow of his death with a true insight of his invaluable merits:—

"In looking around his contemporaries we fail to find one of his race or country who for moral strength and for the wealth of his intellectual equipment could compare with him.... We have to go back to Ram Mohan Roy early in the last century to find a great Indian combining as Mr. Ranade did the diverse qualities and pursuits of a political, religious and social Reformer and pursuing each purpose with equal influence and power..It was a noteworthy characteristic of Mr. Ranade's life that the activities in three fields of

labour—the religious, the social and political, began at the same period and continued almost concurrently. These activities, life-long ones—continued without interfering with the most exacting duties of a Judge. We have to wait—how long we cannot say—till another giant worker like Ranade again incarnates among us."

The first time in my life I had heard of him was in the early or middle of the eighties of the last century when he had come to Madras for a short stay and delivered a lecture on "Fact and Fiction" in the Pachaiyappa's College. From at a distance I could only catch a glimpse of his stalwart figure. His words flowed easily in a regular strain and he seemed to concentrate all his thoughts on the subject he had chosen.

MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH HIM

How I became acquainted with him, how the acquaintance developed into personal liking on his part towards me and how his confidence and esteem continued right up to his life are matters of some public interest. It was a mere happy accident following the footsteps of public work. When with two friends I was editing in Madras "The *Indian Social Reformer*" the Poona tea incident of a somewhat sensational nature at the time occurred. To be brief Ranade and a number of his friends and followers, one fine evening, took tea (and tea I presume includes biscuits and other light delicacies) in the hospitable residence of an English Missionary friend at Poona. It testifies in a remarkable manner to the primitive barbarism of that period of

India's social evolution, that this petty, trivial, social etiquette, wholly private and domestic, was published in the Poona papers, and that section of the local public which was inimical to social reform proclivities of Ranade made much of this deviation from strictly orthodox sectarian exclusiveness of the Brahmin community and set up a loud roar of religion in danger. Some of the more bigoted among the orthodox or reactionary educated elements insisted on the excommunication from caste of the offenders against customary practices of those involved in the tea incident. Many of the weak-hearted among Ranade's adherents went to him for a speedy solution of this impending danger. In the deliberations which took place as the result of this storm in the tea cup, Ranade and his friends, to appease the religious thirst of the opposing party, consented to perform penance or *prayaschittam* and then they got over the temporary inconvenience. But the remedy was worse than the disease and subjected Ranade and his party to the unlimited ridicule of all enlightened lovers of India's social progress.

Penance or *Prayaschittam* as originally prescribed by our wise, ancient ancestors is strictly applicable only for lapses from orthodoxy brought about by circumstances beyond our control or without our conciousness or knowledge. However in marking stages of political and social evolution, we have to twist and turn ancient tenets and practices so as to suit our present day inconveniences and requirements. Almost all the papers in India began to write on the tea incident. At

that time it was summer vacation, and both my friends associated with me in the conduct of the *Reformer* were then employed in the Education Department, and were absent from Madras for some weeks. It was a very dull season. Topics for public comment were few. Having had to write for two papers the *Hindu* and the *Reformer* I devoted the columns of the latter, week after week, for a month or more to an analysis of the tea incident—in all its imaginable aspects. Now to me, it is a matter of surprise and wonder why or how I was impelled to write so much on such a simple matter. Ranade's eminent contemporaries and friends in Bombay were among the best friends of the *Reformer* and held the paper in great regard. To them it was a matter of painful astonishment that the *Reformer* should have taken up such an unrelentingly hostile attitude and should be harping incessantly and so long on it. Till at last when their patience was well-nigh exhausted, I had a hint from Bombay that I had shot far beyond the mark and what was needed was my turning my attention to some other topics of greater public interest. I appreciated the advice, felt thankful for it and followed it. From that day began my acquaintance with Ranade first by correspondence. Subsequently in the second Madras Congress I became intimately associated with him and my stay in Baroda further strengthened it.

HIS LETTERS

Ranade was never weary of receiving letters and replying to them. He had friends and acquaintances in

all parts of India and no one was more regular or prompt in acknowledging and replying letters than Ranade. His other duties were most exacting. I often wondered how he was able to read, write and talk so much as he did from day to day, always being engaged in a most difficult official work. I have yet to see another of his stamp in this respect. He was constantly writing to me; he took a great deal of personal interest in my welfare. Omitting such letters as are purely personal and have no bearing on public topics, the following strike me as being worthy of perusal and publication. He spells my name differently in different letters and I have reproduced them faithfully.

No. I.

Lanowli,
8th May, 1894.

My dear Subba Rao,

As promised in one of my previous letters I send herewith by book-post the manuscript of my address delivered at Lahore on the 28th December last. I desire you to publish the same in an early issue of the "*Social Reformer*". Arrange to publish it in one number if possible and send me a few copies for private circulation among Punjab friends. I shall arrange to send over a printed copy to Rao Bahadur Bhat who has undertaken to see the report published.

If you have not been able to sell the copies of the last report sent to you, kindly return those unsold copies as we have disposed of all our own copies.

I wrote to Mr. Veeraraghavachariar to send me a copy of the latest Madras University Calendar. I fear he has forgotten to answer that letter. Please procure one copy and send it by book-post.

I find that the late Mr. Ranganatha Mudaliar in his address to the Madras Convocation dwelt on the subject of mortality of graduates on your side of the country. Can you arrange to send me a full text of that address.

Yours truly,
M. G. Ranade.

No. II.

Bombay,
29th August, 1894.

My dear Subba Rao,

A friend of mine has worked certain figures from the Bombay Census of the number of widows and child-widows among the principal sub-castes of Deccan Brahmins. The information is very useful. I send the statement to you for publication. About twenty per cent of the Brahmin females are widows and one in fifty of these widows is a child-widow. I should like to know what the proportions are on the Madras side. I believe the Mysore figures are much worse than ours and Madras must be nearly as bad as Mysore.

I see you are collecting opinions about Anti-Nautch movement. Will you through your paper or the *Hindu* editors through their paper try to secure from the Census reports of different provinces reliable statistics as to the percentage of widows and child-widows in castes that prohibit remarriage. This information would be

of very great value for the Conference in next December".

No. III.

Bombay,
28th September, 1894.

My Dear Subbarao,

I have anticipated your suggestion partly and written to Dewan Bahadur Hon'ble Chenchal Rao on the subject of the Presidentship of the Conference. I asked Mr. Chenchal Rao to be President but he has declined. I have therefore asked Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao to persuade Mr. Chenchal Rao or some one equally good to preside at the Conference. I have not heard from Dewan Bahadur yet. As the Conference time is approaching we shall have to trouble you and some other friends to make the preliminary arrangements. Last time at Lahore, Lala Richi Ram, Professor there and friends formed themselves into a Committee and managed all preliminaries in such a way that we had no trouble. You have an Association already in existence, so you have less difficulties than they had at Lahore. What you have to do above all is to make up the quarrel between the old and new reformers and to secure co-operation of both sides. If Mr. Chenchal Rao cannot be persuaded I should very much prefer the Hon'ble Muthuswami, next in order the Hon'ble Subramania. You and friends of the new party must in concert with friends and Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao arrange to make this chioce as best as you can under the circumstances. I shall of course

write the formal invitations and requests when I hear from you. But the preliminary sounding can best be done by local friends.

The Conference report is being printed. The work is very much advanced and I hope to be able to send copies of the report about the middle of the next month. I shall send some 50 copies to you to be distributed in advance so that people may know what the Conference does from year to year.

Along with the copies I shall send circular letters suggesting the subjects for propositions for discussion at the Conference and inviting remarks about additions or omissions. I trust your Association will be able to distribute both the copies of the reports and circular in and out of Madras and return the replies to us when received. You have already Associations at Bellary, Krishna, Rajmahendri, Vijayanagar, Bangalore, Mangalore and other places. You must find out more places and men.

For the purposes of the Conference we require the services of a press for loan or for payment in time. Dewan Bahadur has a press of his own. I think you have your own press, so there should be no difficulty. You will thus see the nature of the services we require from Madras friends. My own services when in Madras will be at the disposal of your Committee and of the students about whom you write. Kindly show this letter to Mr. Veeraraghava and Mr. G. Subramania of "*The Hindu*" and please tell them that it is meant for three of you equally. In concert with them we

shall have to fix dates later on and I hope all these matters will be satisfactorily arranged if young and old reformers join together at least for the Conference week. Dr. Bhandarkar is not easily moveable out of Poona but possibly if your Association writes to him pressingly he may be moved. I shall try my best do so with this request from you.

No. IV.

Bombay,
3rd November, 1894.

My Dear Subbarao,

You will be glad to learn that the Hon'ble Mr. Subramania Iyer has consented to act as President of the next Conference. I wrote to the Hon'ble Mr. Chenchal Rao and the Hon'ble Mr. Muthuswami Iyer. They both declined but have promised co-operation. I am glad that Mr. Subramania Iyer has consented because as far as I could gather he is agreeable to both your old and young reformers. You mentioned his name and so did Dewan Bahadur also. Kindly correspond with him and after consulting with Mr. Veeraraghavachari and the Hon'ble Sankar Nair, fix the time and place of the Conference. We shall have to notify it in our second circular. We want the use of the Congress Hall for Sunday the 30th and the Congress tents for the previous days for the preliminary meetings and for the public address."

No. V.

Bombay,
7th November, 1894.

"My Dear Subbarao,

I am glad that Mr. Subramania Iyer's acceptance has given you and also Dewan Bahadur such satisfaction. Raghunath Rao writes to me. 'You need have no anxiety about anything. I shall work with him and do the needful'. This is so far satisfactory.

Will you please in consultation with the two Dewan Bahadurs finally fix the subjects to be discussed. We generally issue a final circular in which we fix the subject with the consent of the local Committee because that Committee generally furnishes the largest body of speakers.

About our residence, I and others who come to the Conference generally manage to take our food with the delegates of our province who come to the Congress. We need each other's help for our respective work.

We shall thank you if you make arrangements for our residence near the Congress Camp in tents or houses as may be most convenient. Let me have the reports of your Madras Association with the circular referred to above.

I shall inform Dr. Bhandarkar of your wishes. Meanwhile why do you not send him an urgent invitation signed by a few friends from Madras."

No. VI.

Cumballa Hill, Bombay,
9th November, 1894.

"My Dear Subbarao,

I duly received your letter of the 7th instant. I am glad that you and Natarajan have been so kind to the unfortunate widow and that it has been your privilege to arrange for her happy union with the Hyderabad gentleman.

Madras has been not very active this year in the cause of remarriage. We have had 7 marriages in the Presidency this year and 9 remarriages last year. We have had in all 75 remarriages during the last 25 years. I need hardly say that you have my full sympathies in the laudable efforts you are making to help the cause. I have set apart a sum last year for various charities and among others for this cause also. I shall send you a sum of Rs. 25 by money order. You can present it as a gift to the bride in such a form as you may approve.

Mr. Chandavarkar writes to me that he has arranged to send a Sadi of Rs. 36. I wish you had this celebration during the last week in December but I can realise your difficulties and will not press that suggestion from the selfish satisfaction of being present at the celebration."

No. VII.

Cumballa Hill, Bombay,
26th November, 1894.

"My Dear Subbarao,

I duly received your letter and was glad to learn that a Committee has been formed with Mr. A. Subba Rao as Secretary. I have written to him a long letter to-day which is meant for you also. I hope you will help in his heavy work.

I propose to send to you the reports as they come in from different Associations to be published in the '*Reformer*' and widely distributed. I do not think the paper can do better service than publishing these reports. You can make commencement by publishing the two circulars, copies of which have already been sent to Mr. A. Subba Rao to-day. The other reports will follow as I find time. I do not think Mr. Javarilal can be induced to come to Madras unless we choose him as the President of the Congress. It would have been better if we had a native President this time. About half a dozen gentlemen will accompany me as visitors to Madras who will take part in the Conference though they have been precluded from taking a part in the Congress."

No. VIII.

Cumballa Hill, Bombay,
1st December, 1894.

"Dear Mr. Subbarao,

Many thanks for your letter of the 29th ultimo. I was glad to read of the support which the Conference

movement has found at the hands of the merchants of Madura and the Raja and Dewan of Venkatgiri.

I have sent a summary of five reports to Mr. A. Subbarao and I have asked him to print a large number of copies of the same after sending the proofs of the same to me here. I am going to send him a second instalment in a day or so. Find room for them in the '*Reformer*'.

About caste troubles referred to in your letter it is to be expected that some noise will be made in consequence of the late remarriage. I think Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao will not go against you. I am not so sure about the other gentleman."

The above will give some idea to the public of the amount of time and attention to details and personal trouble taken by Ranade in the cause of the Conference and his ardent desire to conciliate all parties. Regarding the social Conference of 1894 as he referred to the Hon'ble Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar, I approached him on the subject and the following letter shows his response to the request.

Mylapore,
17th November.

"My Dear Subbarao,

I have promised to Justice Ranade to do what I can to further the objects of the Social Conference which is to come off in December next at Madras. I have no idea of what the Committee has to do. I have no objection to my name being there, provided it has nothing to

do with the Congress. I shall feel obliged if you will find it convenient to see me a day or two before you place my name among the members of the Committee."

Ever Yours Sincerely,

T. Muthuswami.

No. IX.

Cumballa Hill, Bombay,
16th October, 1895.

" My Dear Subbarao,

I received both your letters. You are not quite accurate when you say that there are no Associations in different parts of the country which interest themselves in the Conference. There are many such Associations who do work all the year round and do better work than the Congress Committees even. You will find the list of some of them in the Annual Report. Several of these Associations appoint delegates and have been doing so for years. If there were no such Associations working in different parts of the country, I would not place much value on the Conference. It is true that we do not separate delegates from non-delegates. In social matters each man represents a large number of people who feel with him without his being specially appointed by them. The political work is a work of force and very properly representation by election has to be resorted to. In social matters, the question is not of force, but of conviction and, if all shades of views are represented, delegation by election is not of the same consequence. Both gatherings are in

their infant stage. Hard and fast rules are not desirable. Half the mischief is due to our own people taking it into their head to do the work of the enemy by self-condemnation. Your Presidency, I think, is less open than other parts of India to the charge of indifference. In our parts of the country, the struggle has commenced in right earnest between the two parties. We do not desire the struggle, but it cannot be helped. We, however, desire that our friends in all parts should have patience with the small band of earnest workers scattered in every town, who are being cried down and abused by the other side, who want no change. I wish that the writers in your papers should bear this critical condition in mind. If you have not any Maratha speaking friends, you should try to have a correspondent at Poona to keep you informed of the struggle that is going on there. It is a genuine struggle between earnest men and, though we may be out-numbered now, I have faith from my personal knowledge of 30 years that we must win in the end. This is at least how the thing strikes me. I wish 'The *Reformer*' also reflected these sentiments and not bear witness against its best friends, who are now in the thick of the fight."

"You might show the first portion of this to Mr. Veeraraghava and Mr. Subramania Iyer. I want 'The *Hindu*' to have a temporary correspondent in Poona to keep you informed of the struggle for supremacy there going on between the reformers and the anti-reformists. They should also know that every

word they utter is a word spoken between two hostile planks.

Yours truly,
M. G. Ranade".

No. X.

Cumbaila Hill, Bombay,
1st December, 1895.

"My Dear Subbarao,

I received your letter of the 28th ultimo. When you know all the circumstances, you will have no reason to think that we have acted unwisely in making the announcement in the way we did last week. The Committee bound themselves by a Resolution that they would decide the matter according as they found the majority of the Congress Committees for or against the continuance of the old practice. (Holding the Social Conference in the Congress Pandal.) This was an unwise step, but they were forced into it from a desire to conciliate. The decision was to be taken after receiving the replies from at least three-fourths of the Committees. If the Congress Committees had done their duty promptly, saying yes or no as they thought best, there would have been no difficulty ; as it was, notwithstanding my circulars, letters, telegrams from Poona, these Committees held aloof and only 30 replies were received in three weeks, from the date of the circular and within the time fixed for discussion. Your Madras Committee was the principal offender. Mr. Veeraraghavachari wrote very hopefully at first, but this Committee has sent no reply up-to-date, and three or

four days ago he sent me a letter in which he asked me to make peace on my terms. Bengal did the same. The Bombay Committee held back till the last hour, when they passed a Resolution in very doubtful terms. The smaller Committees did better. In all up-to-date, we have heard from 42 places, 14 against and 28 favourable. The majority is thus decidedly for the Conference. But, as many of those who sent a favourable reply advised me to see that the Congress did not suffer, and as many others were quite indifferent either way, I did not think it proper to prolong the controversy; more especially, as many who voted against said that they did so reluctantly, and only asked me to make a concession this year.

These were the circumstances in which the choice had to be made, and as the Reception Committee in Poona were bound by their Resolution, I thought it my duty to take responsibility on myself and relieve them from a position in which they could neither say yes or no without provoking controversy. If I am sorry for any body in this connection, it is for those friends who, after having encouraged me with hopes, held back and counselled peace at any price. It is a general weakness of the Nation. So, nobody is particularly at fault.

You can make use of this information in 'The *Reformer*' to set matters right without, of course, disclosing names.

Your Conference Committees also this year appear to be inactive. Nearly a month has elapsed since my circular asking for reports and, as yet, only

one or two reports have been promised and none has come".

No. XI.

Cumballa Hill, Bombay,
23rd March, 1896.

"My Dear Subbarao,

On the first point, there is no room whatever for any doubt about the legality of the marriage celebrated after puberty. We have on our side celebrated several such marriages between 15 and 16 and even the orthodox community and priests have taken no objection and joined and celebrated the marriages. The texts are quite clear that puberty is only a safe limit. The girl can wait for one or two years more and then get herself married. Only the other day in very high life in Bombay, a girl betrothed at eight, declined to marry at 15 as she wanted to prosecute her studies. The Court declared that it could not compel the girl to marry and only awarded nominal damages to the husband. You need, therefore, have no anxiety on this head; no legislation is required. During the last 5 or 6 years, we have had some 6 late marriages without objection.

As regards your second point, the discarded wife can claim maintenance, but maintenance is not mere subsistence. I have known cases in which in good families, I have myself awarded maintenance up to Rs. 100 per month. The Hindu Law is very beneficient in this matter. If the husband's conduct has been bad and if he has means, the wife can claim to be as respectably

provided for as that position of the family permits and requires.

Brother Baba has gone to East Africa as doctor in charge of a steamship on a month's engagement."

No. XII.

Mahabaleshwar,
21st May, 1897.

"My Dear Subbarao,

'I duly received your note from Bangalore of the 18th instant. I was glad to learn that Professor Gokhale's evidence has given satisfaction in the higher quarters at Bangalore. Professor Gokhale is our rising man and he deserves the good opinion entertained about him.

I wish to know from you what has been the practical working of the Marriage laws introduced in Mysore during the past three years. Your last Administration Report was silent on this point. If you could let me know how many prosecutions were instituted under these regulations and with what result each year, it would be a great help. Besides particular prosecutions, has the Law tended to shape the public sentiment against infant and ill-assorted marriages'?

P. S. Is it true that the deputation which was to go from Mysore to England for the Jubilee had to be abandoned because of orthodox opposition. If so, in what shape was the opposition manifested? Did the men chosen themselves give in or the Government did

not see its way to permit them to go ? I understand that the Swamis were consulted. If so, what was the reply received ?"

No. XIII.

Bombay,
21st April, 1898.

"My Dear Subbarao,

'I have duly received your letter of the 19th instant. We have been doing pretty well in the matter of health, though the year has been very disastrous to many friends.'

As regards my speeches and writings, friends in Bombay are engaged in publishing them and a portion of the work is expected to see the light soon. The rest will follow. I have no separate collections of them with me. I have read the proceedings of the Social Conference with great pleasure. We hope the December Conference will be equally successful."

No. XIV.

Peddar Road, Bombay,
29th November, 1899.

" My Dear Subbarao,

'Your letter of the 25th instant was duly received. We were all very glad to learn that you were doing well with your work. My Indore brother is here with me. He has been deputed on special duty and my youngest brother, Dr. S. G. Ranade, is at Mangrol in Kathiawar as State Doctor. Last year, when we went to Madras,

we missed you very much and Mr. A. Subbarao also. I know both of you, but busiest men must find time for other than official work once at least during a year. The great danger of official life is that it makes men to forget other than official calls to duty. Your brother Mr. Srinivasa Rao, is more careful in this matter. He was at Madras and gave us very good assistance."

'I have sent as usual a letter to the Dewan with a copy of the report of the past year. I forgot to mention in it that we wanted the latest information of the Marriage Act. With the permission of your superiors, please send me an extract of the Police work done during last year.'

I have not preserved copies of my letters to Ranade to which some of the above are replies. But his letters would suffice to show that at times I raised important issues and was in the habit of writing to him pretty frequently; also there was some difference of opinion in regard to the estimate of the results achieved. In those days, I was hardly satisfied with the pace of progress achieved in any direction, politics or social reform. Of course, Ranade with his longer experience of the problems, took a more sedate and more comprehensive view of the country's needs and achievements of the Conference."

HIS INTEREST IN INDIAN STATES

Ranade was assiduous in keeping himself in close touch with the progress achieved in Indian States, far and near. There was hardly a single State about

whose internal administration he had not some information year after year, and in which he had not a friend or acquaintance. His advice was always available whenever sought after. I do not think there is to-day any Indian in the highest office in any part of India, who is as well posted in the affairs of Indian States, as Ranade was during his lifetime. This fact shows his vast breadth of view and his interest in all parts of India. His sympathies were all embracing and did not omit any part of India or Indian interests, however remote.

At one time there was a persistent rumour that he was offered the premiership of one of the most prominent Indian States and that he had laid down very hard conditions in regard to pay and power. The part ascribed to Ranade was so unnatural that I was tempted once to boldly seek enlightenment from him direct. By chance I happened to be at Bombay when these fantastic rumours were gradually dying out and I asked him what truth there was in the reports which were so freely circulated in his name. Ranade burst with a hearty smile in some such vein as the following: "The rumours you have referred to are all false. Do you think that after having been a Judge of the High Court, I would ever be willing to dance attendance on young Maharajas? Those who set up such reports have no idea of the independence we enjoy and have no imagination to understand how difficult it is for us to reconcile ourselves to the subordination which a Dewanship implies"!

There is considerable force and truth in these remarks. Once I had a talk on the subject with Dr. Subramania Iyer while he was on the High Court Bench and after his retirement. His observations were exactly similar though not so forcible. He laid more stress on the incompatibility of temperament needed for a Judge and a Dewan.

A GIANT WORKER

It has been my good fortune to have come across many eminent Indians in different parts of India. Some of them I have seen close at work. But I have scarcely seen yet another Indian gentleman who could come up to the level of Ranade in work, study and contemplation, from day to day, night to night, for several long years with one of his eyes almost permanently inflamed, as a result of his strenuous labour, without caring for the discomfort. On one occasion returning from Baroda, I was in his house in the evening. He came rather late after his walk, after meeting a number of friends, sat at once to draft a big petition on behalf of his favourite city, Poona, consulted 3 or 4 friends who had gathered round him, drafted it all, dictated it and then took the original from me and went for supper very late at night. His friend and myself took leave of him at about midnight and took train to Poona. So great and so intense was my admiration for Ranade that I would never forget it. It was a self-imposed task and the interest he took in it and the hilarity with which he entered into the spirit of his compatriots was indeed astonishing. It seemed to me that he was a giant

worker in the country's interest and so selfless that if only his example would inspire other gifted Indians in each Province or Presidency, and if each Province counts four or five similar workers with the same intimate and lifelong interest in civic, social and political well-being and ordered progress, India's salvation could be accomplished in a generation or two.

His name is a great inspiration in itself, and a lively recollection of his noble life patriotic struggles and endeavours, acts as a soothing balm to aching hearts that feel for the long and almost countless ages of India's degradation and India's self-inflicted and acquired troubles and humiliations in mundane affairs.

CHAPTER XXIV

SIR NARAYAN GANESH CHANDAVARKAR,

M.A., LL.B.

Mr. Chandavarkar was one of the earliest friends of "The *Reformer*". He was an Advocate of the Bombay High Court, just coming into prominence. I was not then personally acquainted with him. But his heart was so full of Social Reform, he welcomed the paper enthusiastically and the following letters of his would show how much he liked it and how he endeavoured to cheer us up in our conduct of the paper.

Bombay,
13th April, '93.

"Dear Mr. Subbarao,

I am really obliged to you for sending me a copy of your lecture on 'Social Reform'. I had read the lecture in "*The Indian Social Reformer*" with great interest, and I am not flattering you unduly when I say that I liked the treatment and the views very much. You are right in saying that we agree in our views on "Social Reform". I shall treasure your lecture in my small library. I am also thankful to you for letting me into what was till the receipt of your letter a secret to me and I own I am mightily glad that you are one of the gentlemen whose writings have made '*the Indian Social Reformer*' a readable and instructive journal. I

am expressing not only my own opinion but the opinion of gentlemen of greater weight when I say that *'The Reformer'* is very ably edited and takes a very sensible view of public questions. The late Rao Bahadur Nulkar, who honoured me with his intimacy and whom I greatly admired, more than once said to me that he liked *'The Reformer'* immensely and enquired of me if I know who conducted it. Dr. Bhandarkar also said the same thing to me some time ago. What both remarked once to me when we three were talking at Mr. Nulkar's house was this that the observations in *'The Reformer'* so correctly represented the views we held that we felt as if our very thoughts were expressed in its columns. I have also heard friends in Bombay speak highly of *'The Reformer'*. You are doing I assure you, very good work and your self-sacrifice—when I say you, I mean you and the other three or four gentlemen who are writing for the paper—is really laudable. The gospel of manliness and courage you are preaching is what needs constant preaching, for we are lacking in those qualities. May God bless you for the seeds you are sowing. *'The Reformer'* is becoming a power in the country, and the credit is due to you of having supplied a want which was sorely felt.

"I should be very happy to do what I can for *'The Reformer'*. I shall try and send you letters as a Bombay correspondent dealing with the social sayings and doings here. I should take the liberty of suggesting that you should have correspondents in Calcutta and other centres of public activity to keep you informed of

local doings in social matters. I shall try to discharge that duty so far as Bombay is concerned.

"I am glad I have made your acquaintance and you may rest assured that I shall try to be of service to you in my own humble way—in your noble work. You may expect a letter from me for publication in '*The Reformer*' in a few days. With kind regards and wishing you and your worthy friends of 'The Reformer' every success."

I am,

Yours very truly,

N. G. Chandavarkar.

No. II.

Khandalla,

1st May, '93.

"My Dear Mr. Subbarao,

I send by book-post to-day some jottings for '*The Reformer*'. They are hastily done. I have come here from Bombay for the benefit of my and my wife's health. My wife passed through a critical illness some days ago and I have brought her here. I shall be here for a month. Dr. Bhandarkar, Mr. Justice Telang and Mr. Modak are also here. They have come too for the benefit of their health with their families. We form a nice little company here and roam about the woods holding converse on diverse social topics.

My next letter will follow next Sunday.

Please write to me here care of the Station Master, G. I. P. Ry., Khandalla.

Hoping you are doing well."

No. III.

Bombay,
31st May, '93.

"My dear friend,

Many thanks for your letter of the 29th inst. I have opened it and read it just now on my return from Khandalla.

I am glad you like the communications. I will certainly try to continue them with punctuality. There are many ideas in the head which struggle to get out and the *Reformer* will be my pet. I do like it excessively. I assure you, somehow you are saying what some of us here feel. The other day Mr. Justice Telang and I were talking about it and he also expressed the same sentiment. He enquired if I know how the paper stood financially. I told him that my impression was financially it was not a success. He said that, if necessary, he would subscribe to an additional copy. You are doing a brave work. I know you are working amidst difficulties. But pray don't give up the paper. You have a knack of saying the right thing in the right manner—and, but few have it, you are working very hard but God knows we have to do it all for the country. So far as I can help you in my humble way, I will help—even if you need pecuniary help, I will give it so far as my circumstances permit. But go on in the mighty work and I will follow you. There are hearts here that beat with you and feel with you and may God bless you. I also feel that all around the prospect is not bright, but we must fight to bring in brightness.

"As for the project you have in view, I approve of it. I will consult Mr. Justice Telang and write to you at greater length on it.

"But, pray don't neglect your health.

"More in a day or two. I have just come after a tedious journey. With kind regards to you and the friends of the *Reformer*."

(Neither I nor my friends appealed for any pecuniary help—K. S.)

No. IV.

Bombay,
25th August, '93.

"My dear friend,

"Pray, do not for a moment suppose that I have not written for the *Reformer* because of any offence you have given me. You have given me no offence at all and I am very sorry that my silence has led you to suspect anything of the kind. It is I and not you, that must be blamed. But the following explanation will, I feel sure satisfy you:

"My elder boy—a child of six years was about the end of June laid up and the illness threatened to take a serious turn. For several nights both my wife and myself had to keep awake and foment his chest. He improved and then I had to go to Mr. Justice Telang every day as his illness caused anxiety.

"Mr. Justice Telang is one of those for whom I have very high respect, and naturally my mind was not easy. Even now he is not quite well and is confined to

bed. This made it difficult for me to apply my mind to anything with ease. I had to go to Kathiawar for a week end, now after my return these unfortunate riots commenced. We have passed through a very formidable crisis owing to these riots and even now, though peace is restored, men's minds are not altogether easy, for it is feared, there may be another outbreak.

"I shall resume my correspondence soon. But please don't allow yourself to suppose that you have or any of your friends have displeased me. Rather I read the *Reformer* with a full sense of the splendid services you are rendering and thank God that there are among us men who will say the right thing for truth and progress, without being daunted by prejudice or difficulties.

"Mr. Justice Telang is suffering from looseness of bowels. Let us hope he may soon recover. Though he has not the courage of a reformer, yet his sympathy is strong for reform and he is in a way highly useful to society.

"Hoping you are doing well and with kind regards."

No. V.

Bombay,
15th September, '93.

"My dear friend,

"I have been very busy and therefore unable to write in re. Telang to the *Social Reformer*. From morning till evening I am moving about obtaining signatures to a requisition to the Sheriff to convene a

public meeting about Mr. Justice Telang. The High Court judges and some other Europeans have signed it. All classes are joining the movement. The feeling of sorrow for his death is universal.

"I shall be busy for a fortnight more—till in fact the meeting is over."

No. VI.

Bombay,
9th November, 1894.

"Dear Mr. Subbarao,

"Your letters like your writings in the *Indian Social Reformer* are always welcome, and a source of pleasure to me. You are doubtless right in charging me with and expressing your surprise for my failure to do something for the *Reformer*, which I had promised and hoped to do. But believe me when I say that I have failed in redeeming my promise, not by any means for want of an earnest desire to be of service to the *Reformer*. I have of late been very busy with my professional engagements, and I have no spare time left even for the literary readings of which I have been passionately fond. But for all that the *Reformer* is the only paper which I regularly read and when I go out to mofussil, I have it sent up to me from Bombay. I must say that now and again I am reminded on reading the *Reformer* of what the late Rao Bahadur Nulkar, Mr. Paramanand and Mr. Justice Telang used to say about the *Reformer*—(*i.e.*) it somehow says what we here feel and says it not only in apt terms, but in such a way as to appeal to both the heart and the conscience. I am

not only sorry but I am also ashamed to say and to find that I cannot be of use to you in your noble attempt to befriend so good a cause as that of Social Reform—a cause, which I think lies at the root of all other reforms and progress.

"I am much obliged to you for informing me of the widow marriage, that is to come off at Madras on the 18th Instant. The bride and the bridegroom have my full sympathy and I write a separate letter on the subject. I am also sending a wedding present for the lady. You will get it before Tuesday or Wednesday next.

"I am not sure I shall be able to go to Madras for the Congress, but it is too early to say.

"Hoping you are doing well and with kind regards".

CHAPTER XXV

B. M. MALABARI

This famous Parsee Publicist and Reformer was a distinguished visitor to Madras. One day he in company with his intimate friend Dayaram Gidumal called on me, and they expressed a desire to stay with me for a day or two. From that time Mr. Malabari became an intimate friend of mine. He was very short in stature and of a very thin build. Mr. Gidumal on the other hand was tall and well-built and the two figures standing side by side were a striking contrast with each other. Mr. Malabari helped me a good deal in those days. He was constantly writing to me, and I believe I have had nearly not less than a hundred letters from him. But most of them are marked "Private" and are wholly personal. He was exceedingly scrupulous as a journalist about the matters he published in his paper, '*The Indian Spectator*'. In one of his letters to me he gave me the following advice:

"Please write nothing that gives wanton offence, nothing needlessly bitter. Treat all as friends, capable of being won over to truth. Read your copy carefully before posting and send it in time."

Once when he went to England he left in his office the following instructions to his contributors:

1. No abuse or harsh language to be allowed where our political, social or official opponents are concerned. No abuse of those who direct the trans-frontier or financial policy. Our criticisms to be moderate in language and impersonal though firm.

2. No wanton offence to be given to individuals or communities. These remarks apply to editorials and leaders.

3. When you are constrained to put in matter not suited to our columns put an initial under it.

4. Avoid all personalities. Write nothing personal about our contemporaries—don't name them.

5. If the same subject is discussed by two writers and if you have in both paras, initial one of them."

The following short quotation from his letter, dated the 4th April, 1895, will show how helpful he was to me: "I respect your scruples but should you need a little friendly aid now and then, treat me as a brother. Things will come right in time."

CHAPTER XXVI

BABU SASIPADA BANERJI

While I was in Madras, I was one day most agreeably startled by this venerable pioneer of social and religious reforms of Bengal, whose life story is a most thrilling one, standing at my doors meekly to make my acquaintance. What was my intense surprise when during the course of our first interview, he had the great and glorious condescension to express to me his desire to live with me in the humble cottage of mine for a day or two to get a practical insight into the everyday Brahminical life of middle-class Madras. My family was a large one, but Sasipada was indeed almost a divine soul and he most cheerfully put up with all the inconveniences inseparable in over-crowded Madras houses. His story appeared to me almost as a romance. He narrated to me in detail how he, a Kulin Brahmin of the highest social order, went to England with his devoted Brahmin wife, how his eldest favourite son (Sir Albion Rajkumar Banerji) was born in England, the circumstances which led to his being christened with two of the mightiest surnames, such as Albion and Rajakumar, how his angelic wife died, and how on his return to Bengal he boldly set a meritorious example by taking as his partner a Hindu high-caste widow. Sasipada Banerji had then the severest ordeals to undergo

and his narration of the persecutions to which he was subjected by the high-caste Bengali Hindu Society almost drew tears of admiration from me and my friends. He was a pioneer in the spread of female education and devoted almost his whole life to the education of girls.

His first letter to me after his return from Madras is full of kindness and of great appreciation.

Modhupur,
3rd November, 1895.

" Address
Baranagar,
near Calcutta.

" My dear friend,

I owe you many apologies for not writing to you since my return from Madras. You are aware that I was very ill from the effects of which I have not yet fully recovered. I have come to this place with my family for a change. I shall ever remember with feelings of deepest gratitude the kindness which I received from you, Mr. Subramania and other friends during my stay in your city and I have been very keenly feeling for my silence to you after having received so much brotherly affection. After my return I had been rather dangerously ill, could not move out from my room and my hands began shaking. For a considerable period I had to give up all writing work. I trust out of your natural goodness of which there is such a wealth in your heart, you will kindly excuse me for this long silence. I have also to apologise to you for not having sent you a packet of papers in connection with my work which you

wanted me to send. This goes to you to-day and I shall be glad to know that it has reached you safe. I have put in the packet a Bengali tract being a short account of my work with the working men of Baranagar. I know you cannot read it but should you be particular to know about this branch of my work you may get it translated from any Bengali gentleman who may be there. At any rate you may be disposed to keep it.

The "*Social Reformer*" is regularly coming to me which keeps me informed of your valuable work about social reform. I must not attempt a long letter this day but would tell you that it shall give me a very great satisfaction to hear from you how you are with your family.

Kindly remember me to all friends and tell them I have been very deeply moved by their kind attention to me. My son Albion will return to the country by the end of this month and join your presidency in December next. Hoping to hear from you.

Yours very affectionately,
Sasipada Banerjee.

In his second letter to me, dated the 16th November, 1895, among other things he wrote to me thus: "My dear friend,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 10th Inst Do you think writing a short account of my work would pay you ? It is very kind of you to think of engaging yourself in such a work and I should be glad to send you replies to questions which you may

be disposed to send me. Did you see Mr. Skrine's "Memoir of Dr. Sambu Chander Mukerji" late Editor of "The *Rais and Rayat*." The biographer has done me some injustice without mentioning my name. I shall write to you on this subject later on and there may be occasion of my doing so if you take up writing the account."

All my life I have tried my best to get materials for writing the lives of eminent Indians of Madras, Bombay or Bengal, but all along I never succeeded in my attempt. We are as a race too philosophical and do not attach lasting value to our actions and utterances. We do not yet realise as the more enterprising Western nations have done that the details of everyday life, of our hopes and fears, of our successes and adversities, are of abiding value to the succeeding generations and both as a pastime and as a guide are of far higher value than mere imaginary myths or day-dreams. I had to reluctantly give up this favourite project of mine of writing a detailed and full account of the strenuous labours of Sasipada Banerjee as at times my own official duties left me no leisure and at times his health did not permit him to respond to my request for being furnished with full particulars. In his letter, dated, 30th March, 1896, he referred to this subject in the following vein:—

"I am sorry that since I wrote to you last my health has been failing me of which I have not been able to write to friends and keep up correspondence. The state of my health is such that I cannot sit to answer your queries. I am shortly going up to Darjeel-

ing for a change. After my return I shall be in a state of health to write to you on all the points. Mr. Anandacharlu had been in Calcutta but I could not go down to see him or ask him to come and see the Widow's Home —such has been the state of my health. Albion is doing well at Cocanada and we are regularly hearing from him."

It was only in 1906, when with a good contingent of the Mysore State officers, I went on duty to Calcutta that I had an opportunity of seeing for the second and last time of my life, Mr. Sasipada Banerjee. He had by that time given himself up entirely to prayer, day and night, in a small room in the third floor of his palatial residence. He was so glad to spend an hour or two with me and he insisted on my spending a few hours in the house of one of his sons-in-law.

On the 23rd April, 1906, he wrote to me the following affectionate letter:—

"Devalaya," Cornwallis St.,
Calcutta.

"My dear brother,

It is very kind of you to remember me even now It is a great pleasure to me to remember that you have helped me in all my earlier works, Devalaya Association is the latest (and may be the last) work of my life. Its objects are printed in the margin. From the adjoining marginal list you will see that all the religious communities are represented in our Committee. Lately Sir. N. G. Chandavarkar has become a Vice-President, and I have written to Sir Subramania Iyer

to become a Vice-President. I send you by book-post a set of our publications. I shall be much obliged if you kindly go through them at your convenience and be interested in the Devalaya. I hope you will consent to become a member With the kindest regards and sincerest good wishes for peace and happiness of your family.

P. S. I have heard of the death of G. Subramania Iyer; his death is a shock to me but it is some relief when I think he is now free from all bodily sufferings which he was painfully bearing before his death."

When Mr. Albion Rajakumar Banerji (now Sir) first arrived in Madras, the Social Reform Association extended a warm welcome to him. I could hardly dream in those days that at any time he would preside over the destinies of Mysore, so strenuously and so successfully under the guidance of our illustrious Maharaja or that at any time I would work under him, but human destiny is full of agreeable surprises. Mr. Shujat Ali was the first Statutory Civilian to be introduced into Mysore from Madras. Though he left marks of his great ability as Deputy Commissioner of Bangalore he did not live long enough to rise higher. I believe Sir. A. R. Banerjee is the only British Indian Civilian whose services have been availed of by historic Mysore.

CHAPTER XXVII

ATTEMPTS AT CHANGE OF PROFESSION

When I met Mr. Monro, M.A., B.C.L.,—then Inspector of Schools—for the first time at Coimbatore Railway Station and saw his tall and well-built frame, it struck me that he had missed the grandest avocation of his life by not joining the British Army. His was a towering personality and as the commander of the military forces, he would have made a lasting impression in that glorious career. But after the first two meetings, I found that he had the kindliest heart and as teacher or guide to young men, he was bound to win the lasting gratitude of all those who chanced to come under his beneficient influence. As soon as I entered The *Hindu* Office, some friend at Vallam, sent me a few blue stones—small pieces and added that, though their value in money was very negligible—only a few annas, yet they were very much liked by English ladies and gentlemen. As a memento of the great esteem in which I held Mr. and Mrs. Monro, I sent the packet to Mr. Monro with a letter of request for acceptance. The following reply would show how scrupulous he was in his relations with his acquaintances. He was then Inspector of Schools, Madura Division:—

Kodaikannal,
29th May, 1886.

Dear Subba Rao,

I have to thank you for sending Mrs. Monro the stones. You will understand me, I am sure, when I tell you that my position unfortunately prevents me from accepting them. I however fully appreciate your kindness in sending the stones, and I trust you will not think me guilty of discourtesy in returning them. They should have been sent back sooner, but were accidentally mislaid."

From this period I never approached him with anything but an empty hand. Subsequently he was transferred to the Central Provinces. The following letter of his to me shows what a fair mind he possessed in regard to the *Hindu*:—

Itarsi, C. P.
12th January, 1889.

Dear Subba Rao,

"I have to thank you for your kind letter and New Year's greetings. I am glad to hear of your success in the journalistic line. You remember I advised you to stick to that line, as I thought you had active aptitude for it.

I note with pleasure the sober and sensible tone of The *Hindu*, in the matter of the Congress. If all the newspapers in India adopted a similar tone, we should hear less abuse of the Congress Party in the papers who are opposed to it. There is no sedition, no scurrilous abuse of the Government in The *Hindu* My return to Madras, I am sorry to say, seems impossible,

as Mr. Browning has retired, but I hope my friends in Madras will not forget. There is one however, who will, I am sure, bear me in mind, *viz.*, the late Secretary of the Coimbatore Native High School, to whom I wish a happy New Year.

Faithfully yours
Alex Monro".

P. S.—Send me occasionally a copy of The *Hindu*, if there is anything specially interesting in it".

Mr. Monro had all along appreciated my style of writing. In May, 1893, he wrote to me thus :

" Dear Subba Rao,

I have been overwhelmed with work lately, or would have replied to your letter sooner. I have read your lecture on Social Reform with much interest. Your idea on the subject strikes me as being excellent. Your lecture is temperate in tone, lucid in style and thoroughly loyal to the Government that has done so much for India, though some of your cantemporaries, I regret to say, seem to take a different view. I intend to show your lecture to the Secretary to our Government, when I meet him".

After a period of 21 years, after 1893, in 1914 after his retirement and return to England, Mr. Monro preserved the same attitude of appreciation towards me. In what is his last letter to me, dated 9th January, 1914, from Crawford, Godalming, he writes thus: The reference is to a book called "Loyalty, Morality and Religion" which I published then and which was at the time favourably reviewed by the Madras Press :—

" Dear Subba Rao,

I have to offer you my best thanks for your pamphlet, which I have read with great interest. The tone of it is sound and temperate. The language is clear, concise and lucid, I should like to see it read in Schools and Colleges I shewed it to my boy (the younger) who has just entered Oxford. He read it with interest and remarked " Who is Subba Rao. I wonder who wrote it for him. This is too idiomatic English for any foreigner to write ". I replied " You don't know Subba Rao. Every word of it is his ".

In about the year 1893, Dr. Duncan, the Director of Public Instruction, took leave for a year. Strange as it may seem, the Madras Government over-looked the claims of all the Educational officers on the spot and offered the acting vacancy to Mr. Monro. It was a welcome and agreeable news to me. In reply to my letter of congratulation, he wrote to me thus:

" Dear Subba Rao,

Thanks for your kind letter of congratulation on my acting appointment. I expect to be in Madras in October and hope to see you again. I trust that the work of journalism continues to be to your taste. I think it was I who advised you, in the first instance, to adopt the profession. I feel sure that you will never have cause to regret having taken my advice.

I am
Faithfully yours,
Alex Monro ".

Jubbulpore,
29th August, 1893.

In November, 1893, I called on him at his temporary residence at night 10 O'clock, as I was free only then. He received me kindly and we exchanged views till about midnight, until both of us were prone to fall asleep each in his easy chair. By this time nearly 8 years had elapsed since I entered "The *Hindu* Office". Work on the staff of two newspapers, one a daily and one a weekly, along with attending public meetings and meetings of the Social Reform Association and Congress and Mahajana Sabha Committees had left me without rest. The financial horizon was rather dismal. I liked the work and the endless excitement very much. But I also found that for real happiness—if at all such a precious commodity could be found anywhere else except in the Dictionary—one should if possible combine in himself both the function of the Editor and the Proprietor. Subordinate Journalism without a proprietary right, seemed to me to be rather precarious and thoughts of long leave when one falls sick and of a handsome pension for old age, seemed to me essential requisites if one could get at them. Further I could not conceal from myself the conscientious conviction that if we have to obey the instructions of others and subordinate our own convictions to the wishes or dictates of our employers, then there was not much to choose between one profession and another, so far as the insistence of one's own views is concerned. G. Subramania Iyer warmly appreciated my 8 years' work and advised me to try elsewhere if I could succeed. The editorial staff was a very friendly fraternity. I was the most

senior of the paid staff. Karunakara Menon (Dewan Bahadur) joined us subsequently. Last came Mr. K. Natarajan. I was blocking the way and the first to come, I thought, might be the first to get out. But all doors had been shut. The one profession which would have suited me best that of a lawyer, I missed by my wanton abstention from attending the Law College in the evenings and passing the B.L. My health also showed signs of failing. Mr. Monro took such a kindly interest in me, that when personally he saw my condition, he resolved to do his best for me. As soon as he came to Madras, after 3 or 4 visits, one day he asked me whether I was willing to enter the Mysore service, and to accept any pay however modest that may be offered to me. He said Mysore was one of the best States in all India. I assented with equal warmth, but told him that before I entered " The *Hindu* Office ", I had tried my best but had failed. He said he would wait on His Highness the Maharaja for my sake and present my application in person. I wrote one and gave it to him. He took it with him to Ootacamund. He wrote to Colonel Campbell, the then Private Secretary to His Highness, submitted my application in April, 1894, and sent me the acknowledgment of Colonel Campbell that the petition had been forwarded to the Dewan for being brought up for orders in the ordinary course of business. Language fails me to express my sentiments of gratitude for his taking so much trouble on my behalf.

MYSORE AFFAIRS.

The year 1895 was to me one full of high hopes and bitter disappointments. I have often felt in my life that the poet had almost a divine insight into human affairs when he epitomised for the guidance and benefit of mankind homely truths applicable to all climes and to all conditions of life. It is the genuine touch of humanising sentiments, the truth of which we realise in our every-day experience that makes us voluntarily feel that the poet lived his short life not only for himself but for all times and for all the diverse countries of this vast globe.

"Coming events cast their shadows before". How true at times! The month of December of the year 1894 cast such evil shadows on me that the year 1895 only fulfilled the dark forebodings presaged for it. There was at first the social ostracism brought about by the Re-marriage movement to which I have already referred.

In about September or October 1894, I had called on Sir K. Seshadri Iyer at Bangalore to know the result of the intercession on my behalf of Mr. Monro. Mr. Monro's recommendation had been followed by the opinions of eminent Indians and Europeans like Ranade, Sir Subramania Iyer, Sir T. Muthusami Iyer, H. B. Grigg, Dr. Duncan and Dewan Bahadur Shrinivasa-raghava Iyengar. But before these letters could have a fair chance of being considered by the Dewan and submitted to His Highness for orders, the startling news of the sad and sudden death of His Highness at

Calcutta during the closing days of December 1894 convulsed the whole of India with most genuine feelings of inexpressible regret.

The Congress was in full session at Madras. Among the distinguished visitors was Mr. Mahadeva Govind Ranade who was often in the inner councils of the Congress. When the sad news reached the Assembly the Congress passed a resolution of condolence in appropriate form, and as a mark of respect, adjourned the sittings for the day. I followed Mr. Ranade to his temporary residence. There reclining in his easy-chair, with a feeling of profound sorrow and in a very thoughtful and depressing mood, he asked me: "Do you realise the full significance of the death of the Maharaja of Mysore"? I remained silent. I knew I could not answer satisfactorily such a leading question in current Indian politics to the satisfaction of so great a scholar and so eminent a Judge. I also knew that it was his habit of himself answering questions put by him when we, by our helpless looks, silently acknowledged our inability to respond to the calls of his massive intellect. After a few minutes, he said in a tone of patriotic anguish "It means the progress of India as a whole has been thrown back by a decade or two". I went home pondering over the above weighty pronouncement and desired to find out for myself the reasons which led this eminent son of India to pronounce so decisive and so appreciative a verdict, and to regard the loss of a single State as a national calamity for all India.

On Sunday the 30th December, 1894, the following Mysore Gazette Extraordinary was "Published by Authority".

Notification.

Mysore, the 30th December, 1894.

The following communication received from the British Resident in Mysore is hereby published for general information :—

"The Government of India are pleased to sanction the succession of His Highness Krishnaraja Wodayar Bahadur, the eldest son of His Highness the late Maharaja Chamarajendra Wodayar Bahadur, Knight Grand Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India".

"Pending the issue of orders on the form of administration to be finally approved as that which is best suited for the period of minority, the administration of the State will continue, for the immediate future, in the manner in which it is now conducted under the Dewan, Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, K.C.S.I. The Dewan will ask for and follow the advice of the Resident on all matters of importance and, so far as is practicable and desirable, he will consult the wishes of Her Highness the Maharani Vanivilas Sannidhana, C. I."

(Sd.) T. R. A. Thamboo Chetty,
Chief Judge and Ex-Officio Member of Council.

Shortly after, in about February 1895, *The Hindu* Office deputed me as a special correspondent to Mysore on the occasion of the installation of His Highness the present Maharaja. Then I had a very good opportunity

of ascertaining the feelings of the leading citizens of the State assembled in Mysore. I had free access to the most important members of the administration as well as to the leaders of the opposition. Then as now Mr. M. Venkatakrishniah represented the protesting forces and had behind him a large number of non-officials to back him up. He was living in the house opposite to the Dewan's. I used to enjoy immensely the cautious and silent way in which some of his friends used to enter the threshold of this tribune of the people and their anxiety not to be observed by the subordinates of the Dewan. I enjoyed in a great measure the confidence of both the parties and the files of the *Hindu* of that period contain a series of my special articles. In brief I found that whatever might have been the everyday criticisms on the administration by those who on public or personal grounds might have had cause for dissatisfaction, on the demise of His Highness, it was universally and unanimously felt that His Highness was the Maker of Modern Mysore. It was acknowledged on all hands that His Highness's wise statesmanship had raised Mysore in the comparatively short period of 13 or 14 years to the level of a model State. To those acquainted with the inner details of the administration of other Indian States the above fact alone was sufficient to raise the deceased Ruler to the highest estimation. There were other unique facts which added to the glory and the difficulty of the situation. His Highness himself had been adopted to the throne. The British administration of

50 long years had Europeanised the higher ranks of the service. The inevitable advantages and defects of British Rule were in striking evidence everywhere. The European heads of the administration showed generally a great amount of fairness of spirit and established on a firm basis the reign of law and order. But at times they were easily caught within the meshes of local intrigues. Some of them had each their own individual likes and dislikes, and their own favourites. The old vestiges and traditions of oriental autocracy and benevolence were replaced by Regulations and Acts passed in legal form. In short Mysore then appeared, as it does even now to strangers, as a part of British India in contra-distinction to the old world Indian States. To such a singularly unique estate did His late Highness succeed with a most stupendous task before him. At that time the grumblings of the diehard section of Britishers who sincerely regretted the Rendition was yet audible. The following beautiful ancedote which I personally heard from a very reliable authority would surely illustrate my point. Just after the assumption of power in his own hands, His late Highness, the then Dewan, the then Darbar Bakshi and an European Officer of great professional eminence, were driving one day through the beautiful ghat regions in the interior of the State. In those days stately landaus and victorias drawn by a pair of magnificient horses were the only means of locomotion and motor cars were not heard of. The morning was fine and dewy, the landscape was picturesque, the scenery was superb; the

European officer has now lived long enough to be counted as one of the most devoted friends of the Royal family. But at that time he was probably at the commencement of his career. For a moment his patriotism for his own country was so intense and so overpowering that he quite forgot his surroundings and the Royal presence and blurted forth some such expression as the following : "What fools, these British statesmen to hand over to Native rule such a prosperous rattling country like Mysore ?" Both the Dewan and the Darbar Bakshi suppressed with great effort the irresistible temptation for a hearty outburst of laughter and the latter gave his European friend an appreciable pinch in the thigh to remind him of the Ruler's presence. His Highness turned away gently to the other side as if he had never heard the remark. This incident was mentioned to me simply to emphasise the magnitude of His Highness's responsibilities as a ruler and the numerous important forces he had to conciliate and conquer to establish on a sound basis the affairs of the State. He had to justify to the Suzerain power and to the Indian public not merely the equity and justice but also the wisdom of the Rendition. Then there was the supremely delicate task of Indianising the higher branches of the administration after they had so long been under the charge of very capable, highly trained and highly talented British officers. Our anxiety to occupy places hitherto occupied by Europeans is quite natural and deserves the strongest encouragement. But we have to recognise also that it is our

sacred duty to rise equal to the occasion and to demonstrate our fitness for the task both by our integrity and sympathy. Then the great famine of 1875—1876 had involved the State in a terrible loss of population and revenue. The finances of the State called for immediate attention and the most efficient handling. The traditions of the palace and the customary splendour of the Court had to be revived and maintained on an appropriate scale. All these, Mysore achieved in a remarkable degree during the regime of His late Highness. Not only that but in several matters such as legislation in social matters, starting of new departments, Mysore led the way to all India. Here, I need hardly state that when we talk of the Government as a whole we do not forget the credit due to the ministers who have to bear the heat and the burden of everyday administration. When I deal with them I would never grudge their due meed of praise. In fact the State records would at all times amply testify to the nobility of their aims and grandeur of their practical achievements. But my point is no Minister, however talented, could achieve anything substantial without the constant and unwearying support and sympathetic guidance of his sovereign master. These were the considerations I felt while I was in Mysore in 1895 that made Ranade to give utterance to the observation that I have quoted above.

A distinguished Bengali gentleman, writing to a high officer of the State from Calcutta on the 6th January 1895, refers to His Highness in the following terms:

"The death of the Maharaja must be a terrible blow to you;.....the sudden and premature death of the Maharaja has cast a gloom over the whole of India. While all are lamenting his death, while India has lost her most exemplary Prince and Mysore, her beloved Crown, we also feel that we have lost a personal friend and benefactor and that many of my intimate friends have become quite disconsolate in the loss of their most favourite master. He has been specially kind and cordial to me while we visited the Province; and we shall never be able to forget the generous and hospitable reception he then gave us.

"But the mysteries of Providence are inscrutable. Who knew that the Maharaja would come so far to lay his ashes in the Ganges? Calcutta will henceforth be a place of pilgrimage to all Mysoreans and you may be sure that the memory of the late Maharaja is as dear to the people of Calcutta, nay the whole of India, as to the people of Mysore. His generous donations given so unassumingly have benefited many public bodies not only in Calcutta but throughout India."

After finishing my work in Mysore I called on the Dewan to take leave of him. He was naturally in a most depressing mood and the death of his sovereign was indeed the heaviest of blows. He frankly told me that under the changed conditions there was very little chance of his holding out any promise to me but all that he could do was to preserve my papers for consideration when a favourable opportunity might arise. I felt he was perfectly in the right and the fates were against

me. The atmosphere around him was an enervating one. His adversaries and hostile critics felt very keen disappointment at his continuance in office after being at the helm of the State continuously for more than a decade, while as a rule, the normal tenure of the office of a Dewan did not exceed a period of five years. His friends and admirers, on the other hand, contended that one of the great factors in the onward march of Mysore was the Dewan's great talents and the implicit confidence of His Highness which he had won by his own merits. They thought that particularly at that unhappy juncture his services could not be spared and if continuity of progress during the Regency period was to be ensured, his presence and his intimate connection with the State was absolutely essential. I could infer from what I saw and heard at the time that the Palace and the Government of India shared in the latter view. But at the same time his powers were naturally circumscribed and instead of the free and unopposed voice he used to command, under the new arrangement he had to carry with him the good will of three Executive Councillors. If there is any one high office which is actually a bed of thorns it is undoubtedly that of a Dewan of a Indian State. I shall enlarge on this theme later on, but it would suffice here if I remark that in my long experience I have found while almost every new Dewan is welcomed with addresses and entertainments, at the time of his retirement or severance from the office, the bulk of the people who were most enthusiastic in congratulating him at the commencement of his term.

usually give vent to a sigh of relief and wished him godspeed silently to his well-earned rest. This merely explains the great gulf which exists between our anticipation of another gentleman's career and his actual achievements. I could therefore clearly judge of the extraordinary difficulties which the Dewan had to face during the Regency period, especially after the excitement and worry of high office and the concomitant pressure of high life had debilitated his health a great deal. Consequently I gave up all hopes and returned to Madras a bit sadder and a great deal wiser.

His Highness the Maharaja Gaikwar.

Some of my Bombay friends realizing the Mysore situation, brought my name to the notice of His Highness the Maharaja Gaikwar. When His Highness was encamped at Ooty in the summer of 1895, all of a sudden, I had a call from the officer in waiting on His Highness to go to Ootacamund for an interview. I obeyed the requisition. It was a most delightful experience. It was the first time in my life that I had a free, full and frank conversation with the exalted ruler of an Indian State. On the first day the interview lasted for nearly two hours and His Highness put me questions on all the branches of administration. He commanded an intimate knowledge of all administrative intricacies and of the state of affairs both in British India and in Indian States. It was really a great intellectual pastime to discuss public matters with one who is a master of all details. His Highness's con-

descension was so great that in the enthusiasm of the argument, I more than once forgot the exalted status of the august personage with whom I was talking. After two interviews it was clear to me that I should be content with the acquaintance I had made. The next day I saw Sir K. Seshadri Iyer who was also at Ooty at the time. He mildly rebuked me for not having called on him prior to my waiting on His Highness the Maharaja of Baroda with whom he was intimately acquainted and justified his rebuke by the mention of some convincing details. He also asked me not to think of Mysore as in the interval between the installation at Mysore and his departure to Ooty some incidents had occurred which made it impossible for him to think of holding out the least ray of hope to me. Thus I spent three days in a fruitless endeavour.

LORD WENLOCK.

I was rather troubled at heart as both Mysore and Baroda had failed me and I did not like to return to Madras without achieving something however small to my credit. The next day I called on Mr. Maccartie, I. C. S., Private Secretary to the Governor. He was a genial and kind-hearted English gentleman with few words but full of the spirit of helpfulness. After exchanging views with him I asked whether he could get me an interview with His Excellency. He immediately went upstairs and brought me the welcome news that His Excellency had fixed next day 12 noon for the interview. On the morrow I had a very warm and hearty reception. At the beginning of the interview

His Excellency consulted his watch and said "I can give you 20 minutes," I then thought that that much of time might be superfluous as I had no requests to make and no subjects to discuss. I represented that it would suffice. The famine relief administration of the Madras Government had just then come in for a great deal of adverse comment both in the correspondence and editorial columns of "*The Hindu*"; very naturally His Excellency first asked me to justify the position we had taken up. I did it to the best of my ability without minimising the gravity of the situation and without the least bitterness of expression. His Excellency gave me a very indulgent and patient hearing and then he put me searching questions regarding the various branches of the administration. To my delight I found a very marked resemblance between the questions put to me that day by His Excellency and on the previous day by His Highness. I formed my own conclusion and that was that administrators all over the country think in a similar groove while we of the opposition have our own experience and that there is ample room for frequent, dispassionate and impersonal exchange of views.

At the conclusion of the interview His Excellency again looked at his watch and with a smile said, "I have spent two and a half hours with you instead of 20 minutes. I found the conversation so interesting." I bowed in all reverence and with the consciousness of having accomplished something, I came back to Madras.

ENTRY INTO THE MYSORE SERVICE

In the beginning of 1896 I went to Bangalore with a note of introduction from Mr. Maccartie to Sir Macworth Young, I.C.S., the British Resident. He was exceedingly kind and entrusted to me valuable correspondence to be conveyed in person to Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar, Dewan, who was then on tour in Mudgere. His pleasant manners and affable disposition created a favourable impression on me.

I went to Mudgere, one of the taluks in the very heart of the Malnad in the Kadur District. The Dewan lived even while in camp in a right royal style and his hospitality was princely. He invited me for breakfast and owing to the dew and cold I was a little late and the majordomo of the kitchen department, a stout and strong Palghat Brahmin who had ornamented his neck with a string of holy beads, held together by a solid piece of gold, Subramanian by name, whispered to me that his master had been kept waiting by me, that for the previous 5 days he had fasted, and only once in six days his master was breaking the fast! The Dewan had invited also a few of the local officials and the treat was both grand and sumptuous. I wondered how he commanded so many dishes, for most of which materials could not be found in the locality. I learnt that generally when he started on tour, every small detail had been so carefully arranged and every possible requirement was kept ready, far in advance, to be conveyed on tour stage by stage. Next morning the Dewan was leaving the camp and we walked for a mile

or two. The Deputy Commissioners of Kadur and Hassan were with him and also one other officer. Five horses, very good specimens of their kind, were kept ready and the Dewan and three of his colleagues took their seats on the saddle and the Dewan offered the superfluous horse to me and said he would be glad if I also accompanied him. But I had to excuse myself and took leave of him to leave Mudgere that evening. He said that he would send me a message to Madras at his early convenience; and the party rode as merrily as they could. Before I left Mudgere I heard that one of the Deputy Commissioners had a fall from the horse and sustained some injuries, but the Dewan was as much an expert in holding the reins of the horse as in driving the coach of the State.

At the end of March, 1896, a messenger from Bangalore who happened to go to Madras told me in person that it was the Dewan's desire that I should meet one of the State officers who was coming to Madras at the Central Station, on a certain day. When I met the latter accordingly, he conveyed to me the offer of the Dewan asking me to go to Bangalore forthwith and take up a temporary appointment. He added by way of advice that if he were in my position he would decline it. He warned me that the service was full of difficulties and it would be hazardous for me to accept. it. But I told him that I had my own views in the matter and I had resolved to abide by the Dewan's message. Mr. G. Subramania Aiyar permitted me to go forthwith and kindly promised

to keep my place in "The *Hindu*" office open for me for some months till the Mysore Government came to a final decision. When I reported myself in Bangalore for duty, I received the order and next morning waited on the Dewan, when he was taking a walk in his spacious garden. Referring to my appointment he said, "The Darbar pays its servants exceedingly well, but, in your case, there were so many obstacles that we could not give a high start. Generally we appoinf officers for a temporary period and after seeing their work we confirm them. I would advise you to work unmindful of these small considerations. Your prospects will be safe in our hands."

OFFER FROM BARODA

Three months after the above incident, I showed to the Dewan, Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar's letter asking to me to go to Madras to work as Personal Assistant to his brother who had just then received the intimation that His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwar had called him to his aid as Dewan. The Dewan said: "It is very good, I shall confirm you now and give you leave for a year without allowances. It will be good to have an experience of Baroda."

CHAPTER XXVIII

DEWAN BAHADUR SRINIVASA RAGHAVA IYENGAR, C.I.E.

One of the earliest and most valuable acquaintances I was privileged to make as soon as I joined the *Hindu* Office was Mr. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar. He was a contemporary of my father in the Tanjore Collectorate before he was transferred to Madras. This fact made it easy for me to make his acquaintance. At Mylapore, I was fortunate in having three eminent men who had early in life made a mark in Tanjore, *viz.*, Sir T. Muthuswamy Iyer, Dewan Bahadur T. Venkaswami Rao and Mr. S. R. Iyengar. All these stalwarts had a high regard for my father, and as a rule, whenever I had time to go to Mylapore, I never missed to call on them.

HIS REFINED CULTURE

Mr. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar had a passionate love of literature. He was a voracious reader of the best standard authors. Few Indians could keep pace with him in the acquisition and assimilation of the writings of the most renowned authors. He was also a diligent student of current politics and nothing of importance that appeared in the daily papers ever escaped his attention. It was to me a source of immense gratification and a source of enlightenment to spend often from half an hour to two hours at a stretch in

conversation on sublime topics with this distinguished and life-long student of great eminence, of literature, history and statistics ; and he was well-versed in their application to the every day problems of life. Mr. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar had an uniform, innate and intuitive respect and regard for journalists. He held the profession in high esteem. He treated journalists as his equals and as fully entitled to his esteem and confidence. It was this characteristic of his that endeared me to him, and made me regard him with veneration. He was never angry with those who criticised him in the bitterest manner. His "Forty Years' Progress" was at one time the much admired, the most misunderstood and adversely criticised book. It was regarded as a counterblast to Dadabhai Naoroji's invaluable contributions on Indian Poverty. During one of the sessions of the Congress at Madras, an orator of some local repute, held up the bulky volume in both his hands uplifted, and made as much sarcastic fun and poured as much ridicule on it as he could. I faintly remember, Mr. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar was one of the distinguished visitors, and had an opportunity of finding out the depth of popular feeling against him. A few days after, when I called on him on a Sunday, he detained me for four long hours and took infinite pains to convince me that he was much misrepresented and maligned without reason. He quoted passages from his book, where he had pointed out the blemishes of the system of Government in vogue, the suggestions he had made for improvement, and the qualified statements he

had guardedly made in reference to the past and felt considerably aggrieved at his critics ignoring wholesale and altogether the good points in his book and also the restricted phraseology he had used in regard to the points not liked by the democratic extreme wing of Nationalists. The *Hindu* was itself in the main in the aggressive in this respect. But for that very reason he held the paper in high esteem. What a truly generous mind this! The more the *Hindu* was bitter about his book, the higher was his regard for it. He would explain to me his side of the question fully. He of course knew that we could not change our policy.

HIS COSMOPOLITIAN SYMPATHY

As Inspector-general of Registration, he extended whatever patronage was at his disposal to qualified men of all castes and creeds, and what was more striking, whenever his subordinates were involved in official troubles, he sympathised with them and put the best construction on their doings. I am personally aware of two important cases of Sub-Registrars who would have gone to jail or lost their appointments if he had not taken inordinate pains to sift the matter to the very bottom, and saved his subordinates from the reach of malicious suspicion.

HIS EARLY STRUGGLES

I had heard from reliable sources that Mr. S. R. had not escaped bitter official ordeals. At one time of his life, in the Madras Secretariat, he was made to feel

his lot. His unsurpassed and even unequalled abilities in drafting important Government proceedings, and his fame as one of the best Secretariat officers that would compare favourably with the mighty lions of the British Indian Civil Service, had roused feelings of animosity in the heart of a renowned Civilian Chief Secretary to Government, who by no means cut an enviable figure in his long official career, and especially as a Collector. This Chief Secretary resolved to teach a lesson in practical humility to Mr. S. R. His method was very simple, if not also original, not altogether unknown in official circles within British India and Indian States. Whenever Mr. S. R. put up important drafts and sent them up for approval, the Chief Secretary drew a line through the middle of the draft, page after page, in token of disapproval and initialled the last page and sent it back without a syllable as to what was wrong. Mr. S. R. could not put up with such treatment. When his patience was fully exhausted, he took leave, with a determination never to return to the Secretariat, and was prepared even to court retirement before the age of superannuation. It was at such a crisis that Sir Henry Stokes, the courageous patron of Indian talent, came to Mr. S. R's rescue. Till then the office of Inspector-General of Registration had been held by Englishmen or domiciled Anglo-Indians. For the first time, Mr. S. R. was boldly selected by the Madras Government, with a view to retain him in Government service, to give him an independent and responsible work, and to save him from all further humiliation in the Secretariat. I

mention this merely to show that, after all, official service is a sort of servitude, high or low. Every trade, every profession, every calling in life, has its own defects and disappointments. Some of us are apt to suppose that high paid officers are free from the trammels of subordinate service. Not at all. I have seen men in service in British India and Indian States. I have come to the conclusion that, after all, unless one completely resigns himself to fate and is prepared to face difficulties and disappointments, it is better not to be attracted by glamour of office and emoluments. We must recognise that service means and is synonymous with loss of self-respect and causes acute anguish at times, even when one's ability and character are of high order. Mr. S. R. thus emerged successfully out of this official ordeal. Nothing similar to this assailed him in later life. But he had up-hill work all the rest of his life, to a few of which I shall refer later on. But he had in him great fortitude and great faith in God and in human integrity and thus he easily reconciled himself in all difficult situations, and never for once complained to anyone of the obstacles he had to surmount.

HIS KINDNESS

Once he sent for me and asked me whether I would like to go to Calcutta with the Hon'ble Mr. Chenstal Row, Councillor to His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore who had just then been nominated as Member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council, as his Personal Assistant for two or three months. I assented.

Mr. G. Subramania Iyer agreed to spare my services as he thought that a personal study of the Imperial Council proceedings would broaden my outlook on politics. Soon after Mr. S. R. told me that the proposal had to be abandoned as the Government of His Highness the Maharaja had generously resolved to spare the services of one of their own officers to follow Mr. C.R. paying him the pay and allowances, themselves. I need hardly add this incident was long prior to my entry into the Mysore service. At another time, in response to certain queries from the Mysore Dewan, he had recommended me along with some of the talented Madras young men of great official and professional eminence. To crown all, when the premiership of Baroda was offered to him in 1896, June, he took me to Baroda. I joined Mr. S. R. at Madras before he started and to me at that time it was a novel experiment. My acquaintance with official procedure and forms was so meagre, that I wondered whether I could ever give him satisfaction.

MR. CHENSTAL ROW'S HILARITY

Mr. Chenstal Row was one of his best friends and his delight at the latter's elevation knew no bounds. Morning and evening he was conversing with him enthusiastically. He was much after giving him a splendid entertainment. But our communal disabilities finally put a stop to all ambitions of having a dinner party. One day Sir V. Bashyam Iyengar, Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar and Chenstal Row, were walking in the Luz Road, in the early morning. I had just then taken charge

as Personal Assistant to the prospective Dewan, and was following the party. Mr. C. in a fit of enthusiastic chivalry, while talking about the importance of Female Education and raising the status of women, put the following conundrum to his talented friends:—

"Please give me an answer to the following question. There are two ladies of about 17 sweet summers, both unmarried. For a moment, let us suppose that all of us three are bachelors of about 25 or 30 and are free to marry any one whom each of us like. The damsel A is one of great beauty, great intelligence, great culture, but also extremely self-willed, would not like to be controlled and would like to have her own way a little. Damsel B is dull, illiterate but exceedingly obedient, and has no will of her own as opposed to that of any husband she may marry. Now whom will each of you choose, A or B?" Thus the venerable statesman whom all Mysore holds in great reverence even today, addressed his friends—one a lawyer of the highest distinction and another a scholar and statistician just then on the eve of making himself eminent in the very heart of Gujerat. Mr. S. R. never answered the query. Sir Bashyam candidly said he would prefer damsel B at all costs. Mr. C. jumped forth with the exclamation, "I know it. I would all my life prefer damsel A. It is a pleasure to live with an enlightened girl and submit ourselves even to some inconvenience and discomfort than to ally ourselves permanently with ignorance slavish faithfulness and obedience." S. R. turned to me with a significant smile and whispered to me,

"What divine enthusiasm? What sincere interest in the emancipation of women? What is his age? How noble his ambition, and what an enthusiastic heart does he possess? Have you anywhere else found a parallel?"

The next day after partaking heartily of coffee and fruits at Mr. Chenstal Rao's residence, we left Madras for Baroda.

The public feeling at Madras and the whole of South India at the announcement of the elevation of Srinivasa Raghava was one of agreeable surprise as if something altogether unexpected had occurred by Divine intervention. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao was the only South Indian gentleman whose services had been requisitioned by distant Indian States and whose name and fame had extended far beyond the limits of India. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar had the disadvantage of having been never in the non-official arena as a *persona grata*, as a non-official leader of public opinion whose goodwill both the Government and the public had to propitiate. That was the old established orthodox groove from which Indians sprang into high office. And to-day this avenue shines with added lustre. Another disadvantage under which Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar laboured was that he was regarded as an admirer and friend of the British Indian Policy as revealed in his epoch-making volume. It was Sir Henry Stokes who once made the somewhat startling observation, "I regret Mr. Iyengar has not passed the B.L. If he had, he would have made one of the most eminent Judges of the High Court of Madras." How

true. This is a remarkable testimony to the innate judicial temperament and well-balanced judgment of Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar.

His Highness the Gaekwar was in those days known as a Nationalist Prince of superb independence, one imbued with the highest altruistic ideals, never weary of doing good to his own State, never afraid of being audibly conscious *in re* the patent defects of India, as a whole. His Highness open-handed welcome to all cultured Indians, high or low, and his free conversational powers were regarded as a peculiar national asset. He was then the one Indian Prince wielding sovereign powers who was accessible to the rank and file of educated India. That such a Prince who often was insisting on local talent being conserved for all local purposes and who was often reported to have found fault with other States for preferring foreign talent, should have invited Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar all the way from Madras to assist him in the administration of the State was regarded as something of a romance. These were some of the reasons which led to an unprecedented outburst of jubilation among all ranks and all communities, Indian and Anglo-Indian,—and of all sects among Hindus.

But there was in all Madras one patriotic soul who in private and in great confidence raised a qualified note of dissent. That was Mr. G. Subramania Iyer, the far sighted and the most ardent politician. He unburdened his heart to me thus: "I do share with all of you my joy at the elevation of our esteemed friend. But there

is one aspect of this appointment which makes me very sad. It is the perversity of British statesmanship that compels one of our best men to go all the way from Madras to Baroda. If he is fit to be Dewan of Baroda, is he incompetent to be the Revenue Board Member or Member of His Excellency the Governor's Executive Council? Why not the British Government raise him to such positions? Are we to beg for preferment from Indian Princes after having lifelong slaved for the British Government? The Indian States have a claim on the best Indian talent. We are bound to assist them. But we must go there not because we have not sufficient encouragement in our own homes, but as a matter of obligation to the States, not because but for their call we would be rotting in inferior positions. Do you understand my point of view?" I admired his patriotic acumen and told him no thinking Indian, not even Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar, could ever disagree with him in that high and noble view.

AT BOMBAY

At Bombay, we had a hearty welcome. At the Railway Station, among others two young men of sparkling intelligence and broad national outlook, stretched out the hand of hearty adoration to an eminent countryman of theirs. They were Mr. S. S. Setlur, B.A., LL.B., who often treated the public in your columns with great degree of warmth and Mr. R. Srinivasa Iyer, M.A., now a retired Accountant or Duputy Accountant-General, who was then a rising officer of the Account Department

in Bombay. The Personal Assistant has always the advantage of being more free than his master and I derived a great deal of enlightenment by several hours' talk with the above two young men.

Justice Ranade had the generous kindness to insist on myself and my wife and children staying in his palatial residence at the Cumballa Hill. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar had a magnificent pile of buildings for occupation, belonging to an enlightened millionaire of Bombay. Thus we were miles apart. Justice Ranade the very first day asked me: "I trust you are taking rest to-day and not moving out". I answered in the affirmative and added that I intended to call on the Dewan the next morning to arrange our further programme. In the evening the Justice returned home walking, somewhat late and with a hearty smile spoke to me as follows:—"I have found you out. I am glad I have seen your Dewan. He is a very amiable and in every respect a very good man. I desired to call on him first. He comes from the same District as Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao. The Raja was a great administrator. I have great respect for all Raja's countrymen". I replied: "I am sorry. The Dewan had instructed me to arrange for an interview with you and to take him to you. I had thought of settling this point this evening after your return from the Court as in the morning you were so busy. Then it is an ordinary convention that newcomers should first call on the residents. By age, position and by everything we hold sacred, you are entitled to our reverence and the Dewan would surely have felt my neg-

lect in this matter". Ranade put me at ease. "Not at all. I have explained to him everything. He had a hearty laugh. I wanted to show my respect to Madras. Don't misunderstand me, please". The next day when I waited on the Dewan he was all admiration for the great condescension of Justice Ranade. He fully understood how noble was his aim and regretted he should have somehow missed his original resolve of first calling on him. From that moment their mutual confidence and esteem was indeed very great and whole-hearted. Ranade took counsel with Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar unreservedly in regard to British Indian Reforms and agitation in England. It was a well-sustained public friendship all along their respective lives.

AT BARODA

It was on or about 15th July, 1896, in the early morning we reached the Baroda Railway Station. It was then drizzling and a few weak showers of rain were falling. Such a pleasant weather was welcome, especially in that part of the year. The station was fully crowded with a large number of State Officers, all anxious to catch the first glimpse of the new Dewan; an advance party consisting of a clerk and two majestic looking and richly clad peons had come all the way to Madras to escort the Dewan. The first class saloon in which the Dewan was seated was actually stormed. From the station yard, he was ushered into a stately carriage and pair and driven to his official residence. In the evening a pompous Durbar was specially convened by

His Highness to instal the Dewan formally in his office and to invest him with the customary garland of pearls and other paraphernalia. Soon after, the procession, a huge one with the Dewan on a richly caprisoned howdah on a magnificent elephant, with the usual music of sorts, was wending its way through the broad roads of the historic city. The crowd of visitors and the local formalities to be observed by the Dewan and the presents he had to distribute to those subordinate to him, all State Officers, occupied him till 10 o'clock at night.

SETHU RAO PEISHWA

A very capable and sympathetic officer of the State who offered us a hearty welcome was Mr. Peishwa. He was a native of the Tanjore District and had migrated to Baroda during the days of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao. From that day till about the close of Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar's regime, he was in Baroda. He was a living authority on all Baroda matters. A fearless critic of high and low, an expert in all the intricacies of the Baroda administration, he was full of information about all personalities, and all measures. His vast experience, coupled with his unrivalled power of graphic exposition, made him a valuable and almost unequalled source of enlightenment and guidance. He and I became within an hour fast friends. In fact, I was in a way his assistant also. He was the Manager of the Dewan's Office. There was then no Secretary to the Government at Baroda. The Dewan, the Naib Dewan and the Manager, were the principal high officers, and

there were besides the heads of the various departments and in addition an officer called the Durbar Vakil who was the medium of personal communication between the Dewan and the Residency.

A FORMAL PROTEST

I was informed on the very next day that just before the arrival of the new Dewan, some of the high officers of the State waited in deputation on His Highness the Maharaja Saheb and entered a formal and respectful protest on His Highness' choice falling on a Madras worthy in preference to all local talent and local faithful service. His Highness heard the deputation patiently, had a hearty laugh and with right Royal fortitude and firmness, informed the deputation that the privilege of selecting the Premier rested solely on his own unfettered discretion and he knew the needs and interests of the State far better than any member of the deputation. Thus foiled in their constitutional protest, a feeling of painful despondency overtook the minds of the more nervous among them. They had in a moment of hasty passion earned an unenviable distinction. They were all aware that the new Dewan would be in full possession of this novel piece of information. How to face him? For a time their position seemed ridiculous in their own eyes. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar was of a most unassuming temper. As soon as he was informed of it and had the full list of officers that composed the protesting deputation, he called me to his presence, gave me the list and warned me not to

show by my words or behaviour that I had any knowledge of the affair. He instructed me to show the greatest civility to the officers of the deputation and to make them as easy in mind as I could. He cautioned me that he would be very angry with me if in this delicate work I failed to give him the utmost satisfaction. I obeyed him implicitly. The members of the deputation came to call on the Dewan after the lapse of a few days when they can no longer delay with any appropriateness making their first acquaintance, especially as some of them held charge of important departments and were expected to be in close touch with the executive head of the administration. The bravest of the lot when he approached the Dewan Saheb in his first interview, confessed the protest and asked for forgiveness. The Dewan at once replied: "If I were in your position, I should have done the same thing. I quite sympathise with you. You have risen in my estimation greatly". These words had a magic effect. The tension was removed. It was cordial co-operation everywhere since then.

AT BARODA

As soon as we settled down at Baroda, our first anxiety was to learn, if possible, both Marathi and Guzerati, at least one of the local languages to read, write and to talk. We had a good tutor. The Dewan attended to this self-imposed task for 3 days and gave it up as hopeless. I lingered at it for a fortnight and then took leave of the Primers.

MARVELLOUS GENEROSITY

Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar was the embodiment of fair play and magnanimous temper. The old residents of Madras will yet remember that our gifted countryman, G. Parameswaram Pillai, who was editing with conspicuous ability and originality "*The Madras Standard*", had introduced a novel method of pulling by the leg, high and low. What were termed "Telepathic interviews" were his favourite pastime. In Baroda, as soon as we went, some months after, we were startled one day to find in a local sheet under the head "Telepathic Interview", the most undignified personal vilification of the Dewan. What came in for adverse comment was not his administrative acts, but his caste marks, personal appearance and a travesty of all that is fair and honourable in the field of journalism. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar was always very sensitive in regard to criticism. This vile personal attack affected him much. He took me into his confidence and asked me whether I could not guess at the authorship of the article. I answered respectfully that as a journalist one lesson I had learnt was never to guess at the authorship of articles, for in most cases we hit on innocent persons. But Sethu Rao Peishwa was a giant detective. He would not leave his favourite master in a frame of uneasy mind. The Editor and Proprietor was his staunch friend. He walked into the editorial *sanctum sanctorum*, opened the drawer, examined the manuscripts pulled out the identical one, put it in his pocket and with an air of triumph, hurried to the Dewan's

residence, and placed the original manuscripts (which revealed beyond doubt the authorship) before the admiring Dewan. For a moment the Dewan was lost in the most painful amazement. What was his inexpressible horror when he discovered that the author of the vile attack was no less than one of his trusted subordinates, employed in his own office, a graduate, a descendant of a noble and illustrious family, whom he had treated with great confidence and kindness! The Dewan summoned me to his presence, showed me the manuscript and said: "You are right. Your refusal to guess the authorship was a very sane reply. Who could have suspected that our friend Mr. would have behaved in this disgraceful way? If he had any grievance, why not he submit the same in person for my consideration?" I was full of gloomy apprehensions. I knew that it was a grave dereliction of duty on the part of any officer of Government to pour ridicule and contempt on the head of the highest executive officer. And if such irrefutable evidence as the handwriting of the officer is found, even dismissal from the service was not altogether an unexpected reward. I was therefore exceedingly anxious to know what the Dewan was going to do to teach a salutary lesson to this erring subordinate. The next day the officer was sent for. The Dewan first asked him whether he was in the habit of contributing to the "local press and whether he had anything to do with the "Telepathic Interview" which the local paper had published. The officer asserted his innocence of the affair. The Dewan at once pulled out

the manuscript from his office box and placed it before the officer and asked him whether it was not his own handwriting and what he had to say after seeing his own precious production. The officer at this juncture sank into his chair. He could not further plead innocence. He begged for forgiveness. The Dewan most generously forgave him, returned the manuscripts to Sethu Rao Peishwa and advised the erring official to behave better. I was mute with admiration. I knew both in Madras and Mysore, if such an incident had occurred, the officer would have fared worse. I knew instances in Mysore of officers merely suspected of contributing to the press being harrassed by their superiors in office. I have my own experience in this matter. Suffice it now to say that for the moment the Baroda Dewan seemed to me to be an *Avatar* and a super-man with an extraordinary degree of self-restraint. I have not found in all my experience of public life anything like this. This incident reveals the exceedingly generous nature of the Dewan.

BALANCED JUDGMENT

During the ten months I served him, I found he never lost temper. Once a huge file which he had given me for being worked up, was unavoidably delayed. He sent for me and said: "I should not have given it to you. I should have attended to it myself". Such was the gentle rebuke he administered to me. On another occasion, he sent a slip to me to send a book from his huge library. The six or seven big bureaus of books were in

the room allotted to me. They were to me a source of silent inspiration. They contributed a great deal to impart to me, undeservedly of course, an intellectual and studious flavour. The Dewan's room, a comparatively smaller one, was behind mine. Distinguished Officers first spent a few minutes with me before they went into his room. But I had never the time—however much I had the inclination—to glance through this vast library and to get a precise knowledge of where each book was placed. He wanted a special volume, a small one—of one of the best authors, for reference, almost immediately. After sending the slip to me he impatiently waited for ten minutes—he had a high value of time and was every inch a strict disciplinarian; he gently and without making the least noise, pushed open the door, separating our rooms, went straight to one of the shelves—picked out the book and walked back to his room, before I could have a clear idea of how he helped himself. A few minutes later he returned the file with his corrections and the reference book and never spoke to me a word about it.

On another occasion at night about 9 o'clock, he was never in the habit of taking rest or a nap in the afternoon, he was in a mood to argue. At that time, his brother-in-law, a pleader at Negapatam, a genial friend of mine, and his brother Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, happened to be at Baroda. The Dewan opened the conversation thus: "We form a nice debating society. Will you lead the opposition? Let Social Reform in all its aspects be our subject". I replied thus:

"I have come so far to serve you and win your approbation. I have not come here to argue with you. Argument and debate are all right and desirable between persons of equal status, when one is not placed in authority over another. I hold extreme views. When my temper is roused, I am no respector of persons. I am afraid I can never be both your subordinate and your equal". Both his brother-in-law and brother appreciated my ruluctance and were silent. The Dewan, however, with a singular courage, rose equal to the occasion, far higher than I ever expected. He rejoined: "I quite realise your point. When we argue, I am no Dewan, you are no personal assistant. Our mutual relationship will be one of perfect equality. You are free to call me and my argument by any name you like. Never for a moment suppose that tomorrow morning when we meet for work, I am going to remember any of your words tonight". After this assurance, I had a hearty and fierce fight over every item of social and moral reform. The Dewan sympathized fully with my aims and ideals but insisted on our carrying with us the community and taking care that in our desire to introduce changes, we do not introduce fresh evils into our society. On the other hand, I contended that every man should have the liberty and courage of his convictions and it is not possible always for one to wait for the convenience of others. As for introduction of fresh evils, it was unavoidable. Every good has its own evil. Only we must see the balance after weighing both. Of course, we never agreed. Our debate continued till 1 o'clock at

night. And then we departed for rest with a refreshed mind and a great degree of hilarity.

On another occasion the following interesting incident occurred. The Dewan had to preside over a distribution of prizes at a school at Navasari. Navasari belongs to the dominions of His Highness the Gækwar and is a notable stronghold of the enterprising Parsee community. The Dewan had asked me to draft a speech for him to be revised and adopted by him with suitable corrections. I prepared one and submitted it to him. After perusing it and making the necessary corrections and additions so as to suit his own views, he sent for me and spoke to me as follows:—"Please do not misunderstand me. One paragraph of your draft is indeed very fine. I wish to transfer it as it is into my speech. But will you please tell me whether it is your own or whether you have copied it from any book or other printed publication?" I was not in the least offended. I took it as a great compliment to be treasured for all life, such a certificate from so high and so critical an authority. I assured the Dewan that I hated nothing more than the vile art of plagiarism. I was never in my life in the habit of appropriating as my own what never belongd to me. He was perfectly satisfied and embodied the paragraph word by word into his speech. "*The Times of India*" published the Dewan's speech and commented on it favourably.

He overcame all the difficulties incidental to a new position, by his tact, patience and indefatigable application to details and by winning the confidence of all,

high and low, associated in the administration. Within a comparatively short period he earned the confidence and goodwill of the officers and the leaders of the vested interests.

I need hardly state that either in regard to Baroda or Mysore I am not at liberty to refer to any confidential matters of which I should have had knowledge purely in my official capacity. No State or Government can ever excuse breach of confidence and in India the public atmosphere has not been clarified to the same high level as in England where even the Ministers of the Crown, after they lay down their high office, think it appropriate in the public interests to publish to an expectant world matters of great confidence. We are yet far behind in the race. There are in every administration public incidents which the man in the street knows. No harm is done by referring to purely personal touches which have no administrative value and which do not come under the category of State secrets. I generally confine myself in my narrative to these two aspects in a broad sense.

PROMPT AID

On the occasion of the visit of His Excellency Lord Elgin to Baroda in 1896 there was a painful accident. On the very evening on which His Excellency was entertained in a splendid banquet at the Palace, the public gardens through which the Viceregal march was to pass had been crowded. The park was illuminated. But in that extensive garden there were some dark corners or turns. I was then present in the locality

and was elbowing my way through the crowd. I remember vividly how the ghastly accident occurred. A long and tall post which had been planted for some purposes of decoration but which had never been used, was shaky and when the crowd rushed through it, it fell on the ground obstructing the road. At that particular place, it happened to be dark. In a few minutes when the first batch had tumbled down as the effect of coming across the fallen post, the succeeding batch trampled to death the weaker among the fallen and the process was repeated. What a ghastly horror! In a few moments lights were brought, the crowd was dispersed, but adverse fate had done its worst. A number of people, of varying ages and creeds, paid with their precious lives. Precisely 10 years ago, I had emerged from the Madras Park fire. I was reminded of it forcibly by the Baroda disaster. I hurried from the Park to the Palace to be present at the Banquet. Before I could reach it, the assembly was in full swing. The rich repast was fully enjoyed by the guests. His Highness and the Dewan had taken their seats. I unobserved, glided into the seat behind the Dewan's. I learnt he had already heard of the accident and from his place had issued the necessary orders, and had reported to His Highness the rough details. The usual speeches were over. The Viceroy's route while returning, was changed. With a heavy heart full of sorrow, we visited the scene of the horror, and went home late in the night. On the morrow the necessary inquests were held, sympathy of His Highness and of His Excellency was conveyed to the

bereaved families and substantial compensation was paid to the sufferers left behind. Herein lies the difference between purely Indian and British Indian administrations. If a sympathetic Maharaja were in charge of Madras when the Park fire had burnt to death a large number of people, before the Maharaja went for his breakfast the next day, the surviving sufferers would have received compensation. It is well to remind both, British Indian administrators and those of Indian States that these exalted personages do not contribute anything of their own money to the public coffers. On the other hand they collect taxes in diverse ways and maintain themselves in great splendour. Whenever a public calamity, as an act of God, occurs, their first duty is to open the public coffers and spend freely to succour the aggrieved. Any remissness on such occasions must be classed as a grave breach of public duty for which they will have to answer to God. The unspeakable misery of the survivors can be mitigated, not by mere pompous declarations of empty sympathy but by instantaneous, substantial aid out of public revenues which cannot be devoted to a higher or nobler purpose. Whether it is a Railway disaster or havoc caused by floods or some other Divine visitation, the first care of the Government must be the relief of the sufferers. The shifting of the burden to the shoulders of the public and the dilatory process of administrative enquiry are all good if they are preceded by prompt first aid direct from the State. I was exceedingly glad that the Baroda administration of the day, in a few hours after the

occurrence, had convinced the afflicted of its sympathy with them.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

My first impression of Baroda was indeed one of gratification and admiration. There were generally indisputable manifestations of great public utility. Educational institutions, hospitals, water supply, technical education, elevation of the depressed classes, Public Works, State Railways—in fact all the signs of progressive administration were in evidence everywhere. But there was the inevitable factious spirit also. It is the general and universal misfortune of India that no part of the country is free from some public and powerful factions each opposing the other which render the work of everyday administration more difficult than it would be otherwise. In Mysore there was then an undying and unwearying fight between the *soi-disant* Mysoreans and Madrasees. Baroda was torn asunder between the Gujaratis and the Deccanees. The administration which preceded Srinivasa Raghava's had come almost to a tragic end. Making due allowance for the full exercise of Indian imagination and each side magnifying the blemishes and the defects of the other, I was able to satisfy myself that His Highness the Maharaja had the farseeing statesmanship to import a talented officer from Madras, mainly because the local political atmosphere had become too heated and too full of petty and big intrigues during His Highness' somewhat long sojourn abroad in foreign countries. His Highness probably considered that the normal state of affairs could be re-

established only by one who had no reason, conscious or unconscious, for any bias towards or against any of the contending factions. The wisdom of His Highness' choice impressed me much. At the same time I found that the great and distinguishing difference between Baroda and Mysore was that in Baroda, it was a personal rule *par excellence*. His Highness was the one great force and some times the only one to be counted with. I do not know whether there was a single officer of the State whom His Highness did not personally know or whose merits and demerits had not made a direct or distinct impression on His Highness. Lower appointments, I was informed below Rs. 50, rested with the heads of departments. Higher appointments rested with His Highness. You may ask what patronage the Dewan had. He was left free untrammelled by the piteous cries of competing candidates, to concentrate his attention on the administration of the State. But the dignity of the Dewan was preserved on high scale. All papers for promotion or appointment had to pass through him and his opinions carried no small weight. He was the first citizen of the State and on ceremonial occasions he took precedence even over the intimate personal relations of His Highness. If any presentations had to be made and presents to be submitted to His Highness the foremost in the Durbar was the Dewan. His Highness had also the gracious habit then of calling on the Dewan at his office or residence and taking the Dewan for drives along with him. Malicious tongues however wafted the unfounded rumour,

ich drives generally followed angry conversations
en His Highness and the Dewan or strong mutual differences of opinion. Whatever it may be, I was struck with the genial and affable manners of His Highness and his great condescension. That was evidence of his love of democracy and the instinct of human equality. In my own personal experience I had conclusive evidence of this. His Highness gave me several interviews during my short stay of ten months and the interviews lasted sometimes for an hour or two. At the very commencement of my first interview His Highness graciously observed "You, as Personal Assistant to the Dewan, have access to most State papers. As the sanctioning authority they all come to me. So there is no need for you to refer to any Baroda matters. What I wish to discuss with you are British Indian and Indian States affairs—such as we know and especially Mysore affairs in which I am interested."

THE GANAPATHI MELA

In those days the above annual festival, inaugurated by our Poona patriots, gave amusement and instruction to thousands of our countrymen; at the same time it was a most anxious time in the regions where it flourished in all its unchecked exuberance, for often the masses sung what was considered inflammatory songs and at places, breaches of public peace had occurred. Anyhow, it introduced during the latter part of 1896, in Baroda, a very powerful apple of discord between the people and the administration on the one hand and

among some of the highest dignitaries of the State, on the other. I do not wish at this distance of time to unnecessarily revive memories of an exciting episode and the interesting byeplays of which the Baroda non-official and official stages were at the time so full.

RUMOURED RESIGNATION OF THE DEWAN

Unpleasant incidents of a long and distant past are best left in oblivion. However, the somewhat contradictory orders which the administration had to issue within a day or two, to satisfy public requirements and to appease public passions gave rise to that crop of amazing political rumours of which Baroda is at times the very hot-bed. Bombay and Madras papers had telegraphic information that the Dewan had resigned his post and that within 6 months of his taking charge. The following letters from an eminent Mysore officer and from a prominent Bombay citizen, known as one of the finest public men, would throw light on this incident. I need hardly add there was not the least foundation for it. But then how did the rumour get credence in the most respectable Indian papers? I am not prepared to solve the mystery. Under date 14th October 1896, Bangalore, Mr. Justice A. Ramachandra Iyer wrote to me as follows:—

"Dear Mr. Subbarao,

"I thank you for your kind letter. I was surprised to read in "*The Hindu*" an extract from a Bombay paper to the effect that Mr. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar

has made up his mind to resign his appointment. This of course must be a falsehood. But what has surprised me is that such a para. should have been published at all within such short time after my friend assumed charge of the administration. I hope that he had sufficient time to make himself acquainted with the details of the administration and to hold the reins in his hand with confidence and vigour. I wish to know how you have been getting on and whether you still adhere to the opinion which you expressed in your first letter. The only noteworthy incident since your departure from here is the appointment of Mr. Fraser as Tutor and Governor to His Highness the Maharaja Please convey my compliments to my friend and inform him that I have not written to him with a view not to disturb him."

To the Bombay paper referred to by Mr. Justice Ramachandra Iyer, I had sent a protest and had called for a reply. The following angry sermon which I received in reply amused me much. I thought that personal service always subjected one to such unenviable positions and I enjoyed the contents very much. Nothing pleases me more than adverse views.

Bombay, 14th October, 1896.

My Dear Subbarao,

Thanks for yours of the 13th instant. No doubt Mr. Chambers is the proprietor and editor of "*The Champion.*" But let me disabuse your mind if you think that he inserts news of the character you refer to without due inquiry. Neither is it put out of pure

wantonness. The paper is conducted entirely on widely different lines from the run of ordinary prints. Its watchwords are Truth and Integrity. It will call a spade a spade and will not mince matters over it. It is not full of hypocrisy as nine-tenths of newspapers. In fact it is a journal conducted purely on Puritanic principles. Now in reference to the particular matter, the fact is the writer based his remarks on sources entirely independent. Mr. Chambers knows well how factions are arrayed in your city. He has not relied on interested parties. But when a thoroughly disinterested party and an independent one, of the highest respectability and reliability informs him of one thing or another, there is nothing to prevent him from publishing it. If those concerned think it is absolutely incorrect, there is nothing to prevent such a party for sending the paper its own contradiction under its own signature and the paper will readily publish it. If in the present case the Dewan or the Maharaja think that the news is a canard, let them publicly say so; and there will be an end to it. But please remember that States have a diplomatic policy to follow and contradictions are made which the public discount. Are you without such experience in European politics? Has it not ever occurred in India that a statement at first vehemently contradicted has turned out to be true a little later. Why has the word "Salisbury" passed into common parlance for any kind of diplomatic lie? Surely then, even if a Native State contradicts, it does not necessarily follow that the con-

tradiction is true. A paper may publish it and wait events. My good friend you are still young and have not yet passed the chrysalis stage. You are still in the glamour of Baroda politics. As I wrote to you before, the time must inevitably come when that glamour will vanish and you will be obliged to acknowledge the truth of what I am saying from years of experience of these matters. Baroda is just now in such a seething condition (though tranquillity may appear on the surface) that it has grown lawfully sensitive to any statement or criticism. The very fact, to my view, is conclusive evidence of something at the bottom. But whether or not, these are my views. I would advise you not to be fluttered at the least breath in the atmosphere. Flutter is certainly the resultant of fear and fear predicates consciousness of the existence of something or another. I dare say you will give me some credit for a wider and deeper knowledge of human nature than yourself who are many years my junior. You shall have yet to learn and unlearn many things as you grow old. So don't worry yourself about Baroda. We know our business here. In matters of Native States my motto is to receive even the best official news direct from head-quarters, with a broad mental reservation. We must accept them with 'the biggest grain of salt.' I hope I have now frankly stated my own views in the matter."

ABRUPT TERMINATION

While I had thus thrown myself heart and soul into the daily work, an unexpected personal difficulty arose. At the end of 1896, plague which had made its appear-

ance in Bombay had extended its malignant wings to Baroda. The inevitable plague measures and plague restrictions had to be introduced. At that time plague was dreaded very much. I had to send my family to South India and was staying alone for my work. In March 1897, an urgent domestic necessity made it imperative that I should go to Madras on a month's leave. I applied for it. In reply I was informed that I had to decide first whether I would stick to Baroda or Mysore. It was pointed out to me I could not have one of my legs at Baroda and the other at Mysore. This aspect of the subject had never struck the Dewan or myself when we started from Madras. He had asked me to take leave up to three years and to have my lien on Mysore with the permission of the Mysore Dewan. I had complied with this requisition. However we both felt that when the subject had taken this turn, rather all of a sudden on my application for leave, we could not but respect it. Mysore was to me very dear as the language of the country was my own mother-tongue. I had made such Herculean efforts to get into it. It was at last Lord Wenlock's intercession on my behalf just before His Excellency's departure from Madras that had actually enabled me to enter it. I was conscious of the fact that the personal staff of one Dewan was inevitably changed by his successor. So an officer must always be prepared to go out on executive work and could not hope to cling till the end of his service to the head-quarter office. One invincible impediment was that without writing and reading

Gujarati or Marathi it was impossible to discharge satisfactorily the duties of any executive office. So I made up my mind in one night. I replied I would go back to Mysore. I had completed one year's Administration Report at Baroda which was then in arrears. The Dewan sent me back with great regret but with a strong letter to the Mysore Dewan in which he said that I had been of great assistance to him and he would very gladly with the permission of His Highness the Maharaja have made suitable provision for me in the Baroda service, if I had stayed with him. Even to-day some of my Bombay friends find fault with me and think I had made a big blunder. But my view has always been the reverse. Thus I came back abruptly from Baroda to Bangalore.

THE ADVANTAGE

But the training I had under the Baroda Dewan transcended all other benefits. It gave me the best grounding in important official work, acquired for me a life-long patron, and gave me a rare opportunity of acquainting myself with the administrative history of the premier Hindu State in Gujarat, with important State records and valuable confidential selections printed —and with the notable achievements of one of our distinguished statesmen—Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao. Till then I had very hazy and very one-sided opinion of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao. But when I perused files after files in his own handwriting on important subjects, I said to myself "When will the public ever do full justice to this high-minded statesman?" He might have had his

own faults. But Bombay had justly measured his greatness and at the time I was in Baroda, there were living in Bombay his contemporaries whose admiration was intense. I understood the cause only by a dispassionate study of the State records. On the eve of my leaving Baroda, I had a pleasant interview with His Highness and with His Highness' good wishes I left that interesting City.

If I am not mistaken, one of the talented Professors of the Baroda College at that time was Mr. Arubinda Ghose. I have a dim recollection of having seen him in my morning walks on the Visvamitri bridge.

The following letters of the Dewan to me, subsequent to my departure from Baroda would show how hard he was working and how kind he was to me :—

No. I.

18th April, 1897,

Baroda.

" My Dear Subbarao,

Many thanks for your letters. I am glad to learn that you have been entrusted with important work in the Mysore Dewan's office and that you like it.

The work here continues heavy and we had recently a scare about the bubonic plague. Fortunately we have had no cases for nearly a fortnight.

The cleansing of the town is on hand and it is no easy task. I fear it will take some time more for work to settle down.

Please convey my expressions of kind regard to Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, Madhava Rao and other friends and my grateful acknowledgments for their kind enquiries about my health.

The idea you mentioned as having been suggested by your friends in Mysore is a capital one and I hope it will be realised in the fulness of time.

His Highness the Maharaja has not yet decided when he is to leave for Ooty. I am not sure whether I shall be able to go to Madras in June next. The state of affairs and especially famine and plague might make my presence indispensable here."

No. II.

22nd April, 1898,

Baroda.

"My Dear Subbarao,

"Thanks for your note just to hand. We had immense trouble with the plague here but thank God, we have been able to deal with the epidemic not unsuccessfully. There are hardly any cases in the City though there are some in the surrounding villages. The last six months have been to us a time of great anxiety and work. We are just beginning to breathe freely.

I have also worked off nearly all the old arrears and it is now possible to bestow more attention to general improvements, but I fear that the conditions under which we have to work here will preclude anything substantial being done.

I am very glad to see that Mr. Madhava Rao has been put in the Council and Mr. Rangasami Iyengar

takes his place. I am glad also that Sir K. Seshadri Iyer's services have been so well appreciated by the Government of India. I hope he is keeping good health. Give all these gentlemen my best compliments.

I shall draw up the report you suggest as soon as I can find time. I fear there is nothing of positive achievement to show. It is all a matter of warding off evils. Moreover, it is not quite safe for the Minister to attract attention to himself.

I am going to Madras early in May as the marriage of one of my sons, Sarangpani, is to come on, on the 12th May. I suppose I can see you at Madras.

His Highness keeps indifferent health and will perhaps go to Ooty about the end of May. He has purchased a house at Ooty—Woodstock".

No. III.

15th February, 1899,
Baroda.

"My Dear Subbarao,

Thanks for your note. I am glad to learn that you have been appointed as Personal Assistant to the Plague Commissioner. I hope your good work in this post will give you substantial promotion.

I am glad that the epidemic has disappeared from Bangalore and I hope now that the hot season is approaching the other part of the Mysore Province will soon be rid of this pest. We are just now passing through another outbreak of the epidemic—milder

than last year's—and we expect to put it down in the course of a month.

I have not quite made up my mind as to whether it would be worth my while to stop here longer, but there is yet plenty of time to think about it.

With the best wishes,"

(I believe S. R. went to Baroda at first for 3 years. Subsequently he was offered another term on higher pay for about 2 years.)

No. IV.

18th September, 1899,
Ootacamund.

" My Dear Subbarao,

It is probable I shall have to leave for Baroda before the end of the month. If I continue in the same frame of mind as I am now I shall not stay there for a longer period than two years.

I am going down tomorrow and hope to be at Madras on Thursday morning. If you wish to see me before I leave for Baroda, you may see me at Madras any day from Thursday onwards before the end of the month ".

No. V.

29th April, 1900,
Baroda.

" My Dear Subbarao,

" I am sorry that pressure of work prevented my replying to your letters earlier.

I am myself winding up my affairs in view to early retirement as the anxieties attendant on service in this distant foreign land are telling greatly on my health. I do not see why I should deny myself peace and rest when I can get them.

I am sorry to hear that the recent affliction has affected Sir K. Seshadri Iyer's health most. I hope he will soon get over it.

The famine here has been very heavy and the consequent work and worry very trying. We have two months to pass through before we can have rain.

I had hoped that Mr. Madhava Rao would have included Baroda in the programme of his tour in Northern India. I would have written to him to come up here if I had known his address. Please give him my best compliments. We are all mightily pleased with the young Maharaja of Mysore. He seemed pleased with what he saw here".

No. VI.

24th February, 1901,

Baroda.

"My Dear Subbarao,

"Many thanks to you for your letter received last week as well as the letter you sent me two months ago. I ought to have replied to it earlier but you know how dilatory I am generally in replying to letters.

My health has been unsatisfactory of late and I have thought it best to take six weeks' leave and spend

the time in travelling in Rajputana and Central India. My two years' term will be over in October next when I intend to return to Madras. I shall then probably take a year's furlough and give myself complete rest. This however is a matter I shall have to decide according to circumstances.

I am sorry to find from the newspapers that Sir K. Seshadri Iyer has again fallen ill. I hope he will soon be well enough to resume his duties and conduct the administration till the young Maharaja comes of age at all events. It will be a great misfortune if at this critical time his vast experience and ripe judgment be not available to guide the destinies of the State ".

P. S.

" Professor Ramsay came up to Baroda for a day and I had a long talk with him. His opinion is decidedly in favour of erecting Mr. Tata's Research Institute in Bangalore. This will be a gain to Southern India.

S. S."

During the five year period of Srinivasa Raghava's administration of Baroda, plague, famine and factious rising in villages fully occupied him. It is for the Baroda historian of the future and the Baroda State records of his period to disclose to posterity their future verdict. I can only say that during all my interviews with him, I was convinced his mind was fully engrossed with one passionate ideal to which he devoted himself, *viz.*, to promote the happiness and well-being of the

people of Baroda and to maintain unimpaired the dignity, the prestige, the integrity and the great name of the State and its illustrious Ruler. He sacrificed his whole energy, time and talents in that noble endeavour. During his regime at Baroda another event of some political significance was the visit of His Excellency the Viceroy Lord Curzon—the most imperialistic of all imperialistic Viceroys—at a time when the Maharaja was abroad in foreign lands, for the benefit of his health.

Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar, subsequently after his retirement from Baroda, was nominated a Member of the Police Service Commission. The following letter has reference to it.

No. VII.

8th October, 1902,
The Luz, Madras.

" My Dear Subbarao,

I have just received your letter enclosing a memo. containing Mr. Madhava Rao's suggestion for improving the working of the Police Department. Will you please tell him that I am very thankful to him for so readily responding to my requisition.

I am glad to find also the suggestions run in the direction in which my own thoughts run. The strengthening of the village institutions for all the purposes of rural life—not merely the Police—so that the people may in course of time learn more and more to rely

upon themselves and to resist official oppression has long been a favourite hobby of mine which I have ridden when I had the opportunity to bring this question to a practical issue and to suggest ways for working up to the ideal while meeting the immediate necessities of the hour as the problem which I have been anxious to solve. I should like to have had a long talk with Madhava Rao on this subject but this I fear cannot be before I leave for Calcutta to join the Commission. Please tell him that I shall write to him for further information later on. I hope he will soon be quite well".

P. S.

"I hand over charge on the 13th and leave for Calcutta on the 16th Instant. If you can let me have a copy of the Memorandum on Village Co-operation submitted by Mr. Madhava Rao to the Irrigation Commission it might prove useful to me.

S. S."

At the conclusion of his labours on the Commission he had come for a day to Bangalore. He took up his lodgings at Patan Bhavàn with Mr. Madhava Rao. The first thing in the morning he did, as soon as he arrived, was to send for me and to ask me to stay with him till night, till he took the mail train at the C. and M. Railway Station. In this short space of time, he explained to me his work on the Commission in detail. In brief he told me he had come in for sharp criticism at the hands of the Indian Press for not dividing the

Commission Report. The President of the Commission —I believe he was then the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal—had distinctly told him (S. S.) that he would persuade his European colleagues to vote in favour of Indians being admitted to the grade of Deputy Superintendents of Police, if the Indian Members would not separate themselves from them on the score of Indians not being straight admitted to the ranks of Superintendents of Police. Seeing the then prevalent state of stagnation in the Police Department he thought it was better to achieve something substantial however inadequate from our point of view than to court thorough defeat all along the line.

S. S. more than once told me that he took me into his confidence so often and took me to Baroda for one special reason. Of official procedure and forms of Secretariat methods of work, of all administrative intricacies, he had an intimate knowledge and did not require any extraneous help. But what he wanted was to have at his elbow a good representative of the man in the street, of one who would look at all problems as they arise from a quite different standpoint. He thought that with my experience as a journalist and an instinctive desire to oppose views offered and at the same time to argue without attaching the least importance whether my opinion prevailed with him or not and with readiness on my part to carry out his orders whatever they may be, I would be most useful to him.

During the days of His Highness the late Maharaja of Mysore, there was, I am fully aware, an idea of utilising his services as the first Revenue Commissioner of the State. The proposal fell through owing to divergent views in regard to some important details. After he returned from the Police Commission there was a likelihood of his being required for work in Travancore. But, alas, his fragile frame had already outlived its utmost power of resistance and power of upkeep. His strenuous life, his studious habits and above all his burning desire at all hours of the working day to do what is right and fair, his habit of weighing the *pros* and *cons* incessantly told upon his longevity. Sir N. G. Chandawarkar was one of his ardent well-wishers and he at times spoke to me in admiration of S. S's great virtues and mental gifts. But he was such a discriminating critic that his admiration was not unmixed with regret that S. S. did not take sufficient care to nourish himself as he should and thus prolong his life. He used to tell me often "if your Dewan had only taken to our Bombay diet, instead of confining himself to the old fashioned Madras system, he would have lived longer in all human probability."

From 1886 till his death I enjoyed his kind solicitude in my welfare and his implicit confidence. It was in my opinion one of the glories of my humble life to have been associated with him. I have no doubt he is one of the great Indians of our generation. I can also assert with confidence that the political welfare of

India and of the Indian States occupied the most prominent place in his thoughts for a period of two generations after he had extricated himself from the trammels of subordinate service.

CHAPTER XXIX

SIR K. SESHADRI IYER

People may wonder what it is I am going to say about this, one of the greatest and most illustrious of Indian statesmen whose life-work and whose glory of continuous career for about eighteen long years as the Dewan has been unequalled by any of his compeers in Mysore or in any other part of India. The details of his work are embodied in the two State publications issued every year in Mysore, *viz.*, the Mysore Annual Administration Report and the Dewan's Annual Address to the Members of the Representative Assembly. These two publications almost repeat similar details, but with this important reservation. The Annual Administration Report is but a mere compilation of the works of various departments and the Dewan purely as such does not indicate any of his own views, whereas in the address to the Representative Assembly he talks his own mind as it were to the assembled audience, and through them to the outside world. His favourite schemes and his own estimate of his achievements and the programmes for the next year are detailed therein and the address bears in a remarkable degree the impressions of the Dewan's own mind. At any rate, the opening and the concluding paragraphs are generally his own. These State records will give the student of Mysore History ample information. I am not going to refer to well-known administrative acts.

My duty here is simply to chronicle my own impressions of this great Indian administrator and the impressions I have learnt from personal conversations with some of his most reliable and high placed official contemporaries.

THE SECRET OF HIS LONG TENURE

I devoted considerable time in finding out the primary key to unravel the secret of Sir Seshadri's life, and it seems to me that there was one great feature of it which cannot be over-looked. In one word, he was great in many respects. Great he was in his mathematical and engineering calculations, which enabled him to draw estimates of public works, costing lakhs and crores of rupees; great he was in deciding upon and starting original works such as the electrical installation at Sivasamudram and the Marikanave dam; great he was in checking the estimates of Royal Engineers of British Indian fame and in exacting work from them; equally great he was in framing stately despatches on important subjects; great he was in marshalling facts and figures to win his case in any controversy with the allied British Provincial Governments like Madras or even in turning the tables against successive British Residents. Great he was in the art of controlling men and measures; above all great was his achievement in retaining power and influence in a State consisting of some of the most intelligent mass of humanity for an unduly long period. Therefore, I came to the conclusion that this versatile genius of renowned State-craft had the grandeur of greatness in him. But I would be committing almost an unpardonable violation of the

well-established canons of historical accuracy, if I omit to mention my humble conviction that he was equally great in his autocracy, in his despotic methods and the manner in which he put down his political opponents. His greatness also consisted in his intimate acquaintance of such difficult subjects as the European medical system, the Indian Ayurvedic system, the system of baths and water cures, railway construction, fruit diet, astronomy, astrology, communal organisations, orthodox rituals, the fast cure, the traditional history of various sects and sub-sects of all communities in various parts of India, and in horsemanship. A combination of such qualities of head and heart and their constant exercise, I have never witnessed in any other individual. Doctors, lawyers, and even judges, engineers and railway magnates, coffee planters as well as the humblest of ryots, the highest officers, orthodox pandits and swamis, people to whatever profession they may belong, when they were in the presence of Seshadri, they felt that they had to deal with one who understood the details of their profession. To talk with him was a source of pleasure and pride. He was a man who, if he had been born in any of the countries of the west, would have achieved greater distinction. Most of the Europeans who have met him, including so eminent a critic of Indians as Lord Curzon, have borne unequivocal testimony to the splendour of his great abilities.

As soon as I returned from Baroda in 1897 I was troubled in mind from a purely public point of view with this administrative mystery of the long tenure

of Sir Seshadri. The one source and that the best informed and wholly unselfish source of reliable information then open to me was the late Darbar Bakshi A. Narasimha Iyengar. He was a favourite colleague and contemporary of the then Dewan. He was always at the foot of the Mysore throne. He had retired from office after the demise of His Highness the late Maharaja. He had no political ambitions, he had no official favours to seek and he was an unsparing critic of all Mysore public men whether in harness or in private life. I knew well that it was difficult for most Dewans to endure the agony of Dewanship even for five years. Almost everyone casts a longing eye on that covetous post, but when he gets therein he almost unconsciously fails to retain it with any great measure of success. At any rate, the period of five or six years is the utmost limit of public endurance. In an Indian State, in which I had sojourned for a time, I asked one of the shrewdest State officers in the middle ranks of the service how long his Dewans retained their master's confidence. My friend in a brutally frank manner replied thus:—

"My dear fellow, here long tradition says that as soon as a new Dewan takes charge, for the first six months it is called the period of honeymoon between the Maharaja and the Dewan. Each has implicit confidence in the other, each longs to see the other as many times a day as circumstances would permit. They both of them consider themselves to be remarkably a happy combination. This blessed state of affairs lasts for six

months. During the next six months, a sort of indifference creeps in and each would like to see the other on as few occasions as possible, using confidential letters for the disposal of urgent business, but keeping up public appearances in all Darbars and State functions. During the second year, this indifference develops into a sort of want of mutual confidence and on important subjects more differences than agreement of views become perceptible. In the third year a desire for something like judicial separation makes itself felt. And during the next two years there is a tug of war and during this period various disintegrating influences which surround the Dewan and the Maharaja make their voices and influences felt till at-last when the fifth year is reached it looks as if the State coach requires immediate change of the executive horse."

Making due allowance for the humourous metaphorical description of my friend I found later on that it was based on complete mastery of the various intricate forces that exist in an Indian State. There are five or more distinct forces in almost every important State, which have to be reckoned with by any Dewan. There is first and foremost the Ruler of the State whose views and whose orders are final and who is not bound to explain his reasons to the Minister. Secondly there is the local British representative or agent of the Viceroy whose wish or protest or interference is usually called in diplomatic language advice tendered to the Darbar, and his active pleasure or displeasure is a matter to be reckoned with. Then there is what is called the

Palace entourage consisting of the close relatives of the Maharaja and the members of his family who at times and in some States regard the Dewan as one bound to look after their needs and welfare and to satisfy even their whims and caprices. Fourthly there are the colleagues and favourite subordinates of every Dewan who are mostly bent upon their speedy advancement and who when they are denied the same, may consider it their duty either to obstruct him or to deprecate his abilities behind his back, though in his presence they are attentive and obedient. This sort of intrigue and passive resistance against important measures is an everlasting factor not to be entirely neglected. There is again the clamouring voice of local public opinion, of the critics of the administration who in proportion to the unpopular acts of the Dewan, raise their voice of protest so as to reach both the Palace and the Residency precincts and even distant centres of public opinion in British India. Among this last we may include also the large group of malcontents—who failing to get any part of patronage for themselves or for their kith and kin are anxious for a change so that their ancestral or communal claims may receive some tangible recognition.

Then there is the local press if at all it exists and in Mysore there has been all along the local press which always has tried to espouse the cause of the public or any section of them in which it is directly interested and which at times has displayed great courage and even rash boldness in exposing administrative foibles.

The above forces which every administrator has to conciliate or to ignore is in addition to his normal duties of safeguarding the State finances, of inaugurating normal improvements and of driving the coach of state in the proper administrative road and not to precipitate it into any side ditch at times of emergency as the outbreak of plague or other epidemic. He has to ensure at any rate the minimum measure of progress in the chief administrative spheres, *viz.*, finance, education, sanitation and the like.

Now our readers will see that multifarious responsibilities hang on the head of a single individual called the "Dewan." It is no wonder that few Dewans ever get the same congratulations from the public at the time of their departure as they did at the time of their assumption of office.

Therefore I asked the late Darbar Bakshi one evening the secret of Seshadri's long tenure of office, how he was a singular exception to the general rule. I said: "Is he a political magician? Has he powers of hypnotising the various forces and does that hypnotism blind all men's eyes for nearly two decades?" I was aware there was only one instance in Madras of an eminent jurist holding his sway for almost a contemporary period with Seshadri. That was Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar. But his field was a judicial one. His work was done before the public gaze and no time-bar was attached to it. In Bombay I think during the time that Sir T. Muthuswami was Judge in Madras two eminent Indian Judges had disappeared from the

Bombay High Court and the third had in succession taken their place, *viz.*, Justice NanaBhai Hari Das, Justice Kashinath Trimbak Telang and Justice Mahadev Govinda Ranade.

The Darbar Bakshi replied to me thus:—

"Seshadri is a man of high patriotism combined with almost superhuman or very superior talents and he has a peculiar genius for constructive statesmanship. His predecessor in office, Dewan Rangacharlu, laid the foundation stone of the prosperity of Mysore and of its public life. His premature death is widely regretted even to-day. He retained the confidence of His Highness the late Maharaja, my revered master, to a marvellous degree. During his last hour of illness when he knew that the fell disease which had overtaken him would carry him away, his regret was not that he was dying, not that he was leaving his wife and children, but he was betraying the trust reposed in him by the Maharaja without showing him an equally fitting successor. So his last confidential message to His Highness was to give a chance to Seshadri and to give him a trial as in his opinion he was the only man then available to stand at the helm of State affairs.

"You must realise there were very eminent and very deserving competitors. Seshadri was then only a Deputy Commissioner. But His Highness's faith in Rangacharlu was so great that he never wavered. His choice fell on Seshadri and the British Government approved of it.

"During the first five or six years of Seshadri's administration he was most solicitous about consulting all sections of the public. He was assiduously building up on the one hand the material resources of the State in difficult times while the echo of the great famine and its devastations were yet in sight and on the other hand he carved out for Mysore an imperishable fame in all parts of British India.

"Please remember that Seshadri in spite of all complaints of high-handed despotism is a true born enlightened democrat. One day some of us were on the top of the Biligiri Rangan Hills. We ascended the long flight of steps in the morning at about 9 and stayed there till about midday. We had arranged for our breakfast being brought up the hills from below. At about 12 noon, a sturdy, well-built Sri Vishnava Brahmin of middle age, tall and stout, had on his head two vessels which were quite full, in each hand he carried with him a big vessel of water and had tied to his waist a bundle of plantain leaves and fruits in a neat cloth. Thus equipped from head to foot, he was ascending slowly and in great effort the steps one after another. Seshadri who was witnessing it from above said to me.

"Look here, Narasimha Iyengar, what great difference English education makes in our every day life. If I and you had not that education we would not be holding to-day our respective fat salaried and influential appointments. We might be Pandits or Yogis but we

would not be officers of the Mysore State. That poor Brahmin brother of ours who in other respects may compete with us, owing to this want of higher English education is in this sorry plight."

I replied:

"It is very well for you to philosophise on the troubles of that able-bodied Brahmin, but will you try to make his life happy by giving him any of the menial appointments for which he is quite fit. Then alone I can understand your sympathy in his plight." Seshadri immediately took up the challenge and said: "If he cares for my patronage I will employ him from to-day". I said: "You need have no doubt". Immediately he passed an order appointing him in the menial establishment on about Rs. 15 a month. The Brahmin was a literate, had a sound body and a very satisfactory character. He thanked both of us profusely and he lived long enough to justify the Dewan's condescension.

"Seshadri was not afraid of any Indian or European. Once a European head of a department, a lent officer, had undertaken to complete a certain work of great importance within a definite period. However the progress was slow and the time for completion was near at hand. Seshadri was inspecting the progress of the work almost every day and on a certain date, he called the officer and warned him that it would cost him dear if he did not carry out his promise. The officer said that he was doing all that lay in his power, that he could not work against time and that both skilled and unskilled labour on a large scale had to be utilised and

controlled and that in spite of his best efforts if the work could not be completed in time it was not his fault; and if the Dewan was pleased he would revert to his original British Indian service. Seshadri was in no mood to put up with such a reply and said: "Please take note of it, your job will be gone once and for ever. I shall take good care to see that the British Government do not excuse your faults here. You may retire home but never expect service in any part of India, British or Indian". Seshadri did not stop there a minute longer, got into his carriage and drove back to his house. His admonition had the desired effect. The officer worked day and night, finished the work in time, was profusely thanked and suitably rewarded by the Dewan, and the Dewan and he were life-long friends. Do you think that any other Dewan would have risen to the same level.

"His wildest critics, however harshly they spoke of him behind his back, were like lambs before a lion in his presence. One of the very high officers of the State who had an eternal grievance against Seshadri, was once talking to me in my verandah while I was in service in Mysore one morning. You know as I was in the Palace, men representing all parties were frank and free with me and they all knew that though I was a friend of the Dewan I would protect their interests and I had no personal ambitions of any kind. Just then Seshadri happened to pass by that road and when the officer caught sight of him at a distance he suddenly took leave of me and left my house saying "The *Rak-*

shasa is coming". I had a hearty laugh. I felt there was a great deal of truth in his description of Seshadri, the point to be noted is that Seshadri was not an ordinary man, he was superior to humanity, he was a *Rakshasa,* therein lies the beauty of the comment.

" You know during the minority period the British Resident had greater powers of advice and supervision than during ordinary times when His Highness himself is at the head of the State. During this period one of the imperialistic Residents, who had heard voluminous complaints against Seshadri and how he managed so long to retain his power and position, came to Mysore with preconceived notions of his duty and his strong determination to look closely into the affairs of the State and to find out what truth there was in the complaints then prevailing. Please remember that this was almost at the fag end of the Dewan's career when he was in rickety health, when he had to conciliate a hostile Executive Council and when even his own friends, were at times disgusted with him. But when this British Resident had to leave Mysore on transfer he summed up his genuine opinion about Seshadri in the following words. " *Black or white there is no equal to Seshadri*". Such was the verdict of a British Officer whose purpose at the beginning was to undermine if possible the influence of the Dewan.

" Seshadri on the very second day of his assuming charge of the Dewanship was sad in appearance and in an exceedingly anxious mood. I then called on him and asked him why instead of being jolly and glad at

his elevation, at his remarkable opportunity, he looked so gloomy. He replied and his reply was most pathetic: "Till yesterday I was one of you but when I returned from the Palace after being invested with the insignia of my exalted office, all of you stood aloof. None of you would approach me, I had no equals. It is this want of comradeship and the lonely grandeur of my office and the high responsibilities attached to it that make me sad at times. My anxious solicitude is how to win and to retain His Highness's confidence, the goodwill of his subjects and the approbation of the officers under me". I cheered him up, I said "You are now far above us all. Our first duty is to respect you and to stand at a distance, or else how can we expect the bulk of the people to have any regard for you? As time elapses you will find your work all engrossing and your beneficient influence all pervading". His demeanour convinced me that His Highness had made the wisest choice.

"I may also tell you that Seshadri himself had some doubts in accepting such a responsible office at such an early age. He seems to have given a respectful hint to His Highness that he was rather young, that he had a long period of service before him to entitle him to pension, but that after serving for five years as a Dewan he could not seek employment elsewhere nor retire to private life. His Highness with that graciousness which characterised him, and with that statesman's instinct which was inborn in him, with a smile said that he need not bother himself with such apprehensions,

and if the State affairs were well taken care of, he need feel no anxiety about his future".

" Now you understand fully the reasons of his long tenure of office. In short he was a great and grand exception to the ordinary rule on account of two solid reasons. (1) His masterly abilities and his invaluable services to the State of Mysore and the confidence which his work had produced on His Highness the late Maharaja and subsequently after his death the impressions left on the supreme Government.

I then put the following question.

" There is great a deal of force in all that you have said, but am I to understand that during the period of 14 years of His Highness's rule, especially in the latter part, there were no acute differences between His Highness and the Dewan in spite of the Mysore Strike, in spite of the clamour by the leading Representative Assembly members, and in spite of the earnest attempt by prominent, powerful sections of the Mysoreans to oust him from his power?"

The Darbar Bakshi replied thus:—

" I am glad you have studied Mysore politics so well. I must admit there is a great deal of truth in what you say; but Providence, the highest force in all mundane affairs, was in favour of Sheshadri; that is a factor we cannot afford to dispense with. But I must tell you plainly that Sheshadri's superior genius enabled him to adapt himself to any state of circumstances, however adverse. You are aware in the latter

days of His Highness's rule, for some years Seshadri had the invaluable help and hearty co-operation of so eminent, so selfless and so wise a statesman as Chanchal Rao. Seshadri used to feel at times the want of gifted co-operation and he was deeply engaged in finding out a worthy companion whose advice would be valuable and at the same time who would not be a competitor with him. We first thought of Dr. Bhandarkar but he was more prominent as a research scholar than one fit to interfere in Indian State politics; we then thought of Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao, but his wholesale faith in widow marriage, his strong social reform advocacy and his blunt courage, prevented us from going in for him. We had just then heard of Chanchal Rao's self-sacrifice in recommending his own retirement from the Madras service, and in view of his long revenue experience we thought that he would be the most valuable co-adjutor the like of whom we cannot get either in Mysore or outside. We proved good prophets. His Highness approved of the suggestion and all of us benefited immensely by the eminent and distinguished services which Chanchal Rao rendered to the State. His Highness had great regard for him. His Highness was ready to receive him at any hour of the day or night; he knew that Chanchal Rao's advice was always based on the highest wisdom and he was never guided by any personal considerations either in favour of or against the Dewan. Whenever there were acute differences of opinion, Chanchal Rao's advice was most valuable to

the State and it was accepted as final solution of the difficulty. That is why though there is such a party spirit in Mysore against the importation of the Madrasees, yet in the case of Chanchal Rao particularly, every Mysorean however extreme in his thoughts had the highest reverence for his impartiality and wise deliberation".

THE MYSORE CIVIL SERVICE

I then asked "Why did Seshadri introduce the Civil Service scheme. That scheme was in a great measure responsible for his unpopularity. The bulk of the Mysoreans thought that it was a mere clever device to flood the higher ranks of the service by importing men from abroad and preventing to that extent qualified young men in the State from rising to high positions. I have heard the bitterest invectives used against the Dewan in connection with this scheme. The British Government had a motive in introducing a number of civil servants. They wanted to man the superior services with their own kith and kin; consequently they wanted to keep the Indians eternally in the lower ranks. No such motive prevails in Mysore. The stalwarts in the Mysore service at that time were not civilians. Some of the heads of departments considered very able men would have probably failed in a competitive examination.

My friend remarked. "You may be right, but I must tell you that Seshadri was actuated by a noble ambition in instituting the Mysore Civil

Service. You remember our Prince of patriots, Dadabhai Naoroji, carried a resolution in the House of Commons in favour of simultaneous examinations but the Parliament of the day did not give effect to it; Seshadri then said that he would show the British Government how simultaneous examinations can be held in India. That was his main motive. You know in the art of internal improvement he wanted to beat down-right the British Indian Governments and Mysore was far ahead of British India in inaugurating several new departments in the period I refer to. Seshadri appointed a Committee of important State Officers to consider the subject. I hope you have read that confidential report in which all the members of the Committee unanimously agreed with the Dewan, though several of them behind his back and immediately after the institution of the examination, criticised unfavourably and raised an agitation against the Dewan. If they had boldly written their dissenting minutes, the examination might not have been instituted; of course, we cannot say that Mysore service is superior to Travancore, as a whole where no such competitive examination exists".

I then said: "You have made it worse by adding the power of nomination to it and thus forcing upon the State every year a number of young men on high pay leading to the deterioration of the tone of the service". Mr. Narasimha Iyengar remarked: "That is true; once the examination was instituted, a way had to be found for communal claims, for claims on the

score of ancestry and thus all mixed motives came into operation and it was a grand job hunting pastime; for many attempts were made by our antagonists to belittle the value of the examination by attributing motives to examiners, and for nominations there was such an unhealthy, unwholesome scramble".

"Would you believe me when I say that recently a high placed English official asked the Dewan whether he would like to go to Persia as British Ambassador. Seshadri told him that if he had been ten or twelve years younger he might have seriously considered the proposal. What a strong impression should he have produced on the higher officers of the British Government for such an offer to be even thought of. You are aware that in all important points affecting Mysore, the Dewan never yielded his point in controversy with the British Government. So the admirable spirit with which some of the English officials approached him was in no way due to any want of courage or determination on the part of the Dewan."

I returned from Baroda to Bangalore in April, 1897, and about August or September, the Dewan sent for me and for some days spent one or two hours with me each day in the morning or in the evening giving me full instructions regarding a very important matter in which he desired to consult Dr. Bhandarkar, Justice Ranade, and the then Dewan of Baroda. His choice fell on me mainly because I was intimately acquainted with the above three gentlemen and I was so low in the service and also had so recently joined it that no suspi-

cions would be aroused by my deputation. The object was one of great delicacy and of high confidence. The very selection so immensely pleased me that I didn't think of any other reward. I was anxious to prove myself worthy of the trust thus confided in me, especially because I was such a novice in the service of the State. After he had coached me up thoroughly the Dewan said: "Not a single soul outside should know anything about your movements. It is all left to you to take leave from the office and to manage the whole affair in great confidence. We may require a special code for telegrams. Take this Dictionary which I have purchased for you. I keep one copy of the same. Avoid all personalities. Frame your telegram as usual in clear language, then take the first word of the telegram, refer to the dictionary, find out the exact word and from that count ten words below and substitute the tenth word for your original word. In the same way alter your original telegram by putting all through, the tenth word. The message would be such a confounded one that nobody could make anything out of it. When I receive your message I shall refer to the dictionary and for each word go up ten words and then reframe it. So we will have a simple code of our own." The plan worked beautifully. I managed to take leave and I had some trouble in carrying out the order of the Dewan. But I did the work quite successfully and the Dewan was exceedingly pleased. Here I may mention that when I came back from Baroda in April, the office had given me for draft the Quinquennial Administra-

tion Report and I was clearly informed that before the work was satisfactorily finished I could not expect any promotion or transfer. This report was commenced in the previous year. One of the Under Secretaries was in charge of it but it had been turned upside down by the Council and specially by Mr. T. R. A. Thambu Chettiar, the Senior Member of Council. It was a ponderous volume in which, five years' figures had to be embodied and there was not the slightest hope of its being redrafted and completed within at least two years. I mention this merely to say that my visits or conversations with the Dewan were at no time directed towards any immediate official advantage.

One evening while the Dewan and myself were sitting in the garden bench, a number of European and Indian soldiers marched past the house. The Dewan remarked to me: "Look here, but for these fine and brave men, where would the Native States be? We, Dewans, hold our office, because there is internal peace and these are the men who fight for us in all emergencies. Please never forget their invaluable services".

SYMPATHY TOWARDS THE POOR

On another day when a large number of workmen, half clad, with tools in their hands, were walking past the Kumara Park, the Dewan said to me "Mr. Subba Rao, have you ever contemplated what a day it would be when these masses who are now in such a poor condition, rise against us, the so-called higher classes? We would then have a terrible retribution. It will be wisdom on our part to take them up on hand as early

as possible, give them better wages, give them education and bring them into a line with us or else we would be paving the way for the most terrible catastrophe that India has ever witnessed".

Another evening while both of us were talking about Indian national affairs one of the near relatives of Sir V. Bhashyam Iyengar happened to enter the compound, and he came to the place where we were sitting. That morning the Madras papers received in Bangalore had announced that the Secretary of State had vetoed the confirmation of Sir V. Bhashyam Iyengar as Advocate-General and had appointed some Englishman, though Sir V. Bhashyam had held that office with credit for several months. The Dewan had very fine national aspirations. While rising to go inside, he said to the gentleman in colloquial Tamil as follows:—

"After all, the white dog is a white dog, the black dog is a black dog and the two won't mix together". When I walked home from the high ground to Chamarajapet this expression was ringing in my ears incessantly and I admired the depth of the national sentiment which it so beautifully expressed.

BELIEF IN ASTROLOGY

Sir Seshadri had a good grasp of the principles of astrology. Just a day or two before the demise of his wife, when the lady was dangerously ill, one evening he was looking at her horoscope and the then State Huzur Treasury Officer or 'Khajane Bakshi' was with him. He was sitting on a bench in the verandah. When I went there the officer took leave and I was

sitting close to the Dewan. He asked me whether I had any knowledge of astrology. I said I had absolutely none. In reply to my query as to how the lady was progressing, he said he was in an anxious mood and the examination of the horoscope did not give him any satisfactory clue. Some of the stars were very unfavourable and the beneficent ones were rather weak. So he was in great doubt and it all depended on the grace of God. I wondered how the Dewan had time to master the intricacies of astrology. He might have commanded the services of the best astrologers. But no; he himself wanted to test his own knowledge and to arrive at his own conclusion. It was this trait of Seshadri, his keen desire to master every science or art as far as he could, that extorted my admiration.

One morning he was standing on the verandah of the house and from there pointing to the road beyond the compound, he asked me, which level was higher, the road level or the verandah level? The question might look very simple but I was afraid it was a test question and with my absolute ignorance of levels I might betrary my own ignorance. But the Dewan insisted on my answering his query. He said, "It does not require an Engineer to judge the level of the road standing where we do. Let me see what you think of it". Finding no way to escape I murmured "The verandah level is certainly higher than the road". The Dewan burst into a loud laughter and said "You have committed the same mistake as so many professional men have done; the road is higher than the verandah".

IMPORTANCE OF BATH

Sir Seshadri was an expert in the study of 'Baths'. The Turkish Bath and other systems had attracted his attention. He had a special small out-house constructed for bathing. One morning when I strayed into his compound, the peons at the portico of the main residence, informed me that he had just then retired for bathing. In order to satisfy my curiosity as to what exactly was the system he was then following, I slowly walked to that room. I was full of anxiety as to the reception, I might get for what seemed to me even at the time, a very foolish adventure. However, when I entered the verandah of the bathing room, the Dewan who was inside after the doors had been partly closed, hearing the foot-steps just opened one of the doors and with a smile welcomed me and explained to me the advantages of a good bath. He said that he had installed one hot water and one cold water tap, each within a very short distance of the other in the room and took me inside and showed the taps. He added that he would spend some minutes under each alternately, and that I might be sitting in the verandah till he bathed if I wanted to see him after his bath. I gladly assented. It was delightful from outside to hear the splashing of water incessantly, especially the going in for hot water bath after remaining for several minutes under cold water and this seemed to me to be a dangerous experiment, especially in a climate like that of Bangalore. After the bath the Dewan came out in his pure Palghat Brahmanical dress of

a 'Mundu' round the waist and a clean wet towel over the body and we walked together till we reached the main house. That day it occurred to me that even in the ordinary every day programme of our life he had a very strenuous programme of his own. The incident, though trivial, gave me an insight into his wonderful mental development and detachment.

On the day he handed over charge finally to his successor in Mysore, in the dusk of the evening he was driving along the Kukkanahalli Tank Road with a friend of his. I happened to meet him. He stopped the carriage, called me and said that he would have plenty of time at his disposal after he returned to Bangalore and he would be glad to meet me often and to give me as much information as I may require. This was my last visit to him. Unfortunately after we returned to Bangalore I was often on tour, and on account of one reason or another Sir Seshadri was of uneasy mind and consequently I had no occasion to see him. He was often indisposed and an attack in a local newspaper during his closing days had annoyed him most. It referred to a very old bygone incident. Sir Seshadri was very anxious to vindicate himself in a court of law but all his friends dissuaded him. Shortly after, the cruel hand of death snatched him away.

SUSTAINED OPPOSITION

One test of capacity is said to be measured by the ability of an administrator to retain his power and influence in spite of continued protests and public clamour. According to the established traditions of

bureaucratic rule in India, yielding to public opinion is a sort of weakness, while holding on at the helm of State affairs with a resolute and determined effort, discrediting one's critics is regarded as attaining a high pitch of executive excellence. Judged by this test, Seshadri is entitled to be called a giant administrator. During the first five years of his administration, the prospect of his getting sanction to a Standing Committee of the Representative Assembly and recognizing it as a part of the administrative machinery, made him exceedingly popular even with the most clamorous of his critics. But the scheme was dropped, and owing to other reasons, the Mysore of those days furnished the most organised and the most wonderful opposition to the Dewan. Strikes even in Mysore City, constant telegrams and petitions to the Government of India after the demise of His Highness the late Maharaja, criticism of the wildest nature in the local papers, week after week and above all, that efficient system of spreading rumours and reports of all sorts against individuals by word of mouth from person to person, from place to place, from province to province, all these agencies were at work in their full fury. In those days I have visited Bangalore, Mysore, Calcutta, Bombay and Poona. When I was talking to the revered Research Scholar and eminent Orientalist, Dr. Bhandarkar, in his house at Poona he asked me about several of the rumours then prevalent against Seshadri and how far they were true. I was struck with wonder with the details about the Mysore administration which had reached his home which was

practically closed against current politics. Poona was then, as it is now probably, the centre of migration for students from Bangalore and Mysore for study. It struck me that the Dewan's opponents were very successful in their campaign against him. Any other heart except Seshadri's would have fainted at such an untiring attack as he was subjected to. But he went on from day to day, year to year, as if he was almost unaffected, without any diminution in his power or prestige, holding fast to the two sheet anchors of political safety, *viz.*, the confidence of the Royal family and the recognition of his talents by the British Government. This state of affairs naturally ended in the formation of two or three strong parties in the State which survived his Dewanship and which lasted for several years after him.

MASTERLY GRASP OF FACTS

Between the years 1900 and 1902, in the ordinary shiftings of the men in the subordinate service, the executive heads of the administration of the day relegated me to the records for arranging them, evidently as a sign of their displeasure. Immediately prior to that event I had been privileged to work as an executive officer as Personal Assistant to the Plague Commissioner. That was the reward for the encomiums I had received from the Plague Commissioner and various recommendations made by him. A day or two after I commenced the work of sorting the records, I found it a great blessing in disguise. When I took up

files and perused the original minutes of Seshadri, I was very thankful to the administration for having given me unconsciously such an excellent opportunity of mastering the administrative details in all their original splendour from the 'Rendition'. It was then that Seshadri's great talents in handling administrative questions were exposed before me in all their original glory. In one file I found the Dewan, after calling for the necessary drafts time after time and being thoroughly disgusted with the inordinate delay of the office and with the absolute want of ability on their part to put up the necessary draft, he himself took up the task and dashed off several pages in a controversy between the Darbar and the British Government. To me that one single file was a great treasure in itself. The points at issue were no doubt of minor importance. There were absolutely no facts to support any assertion or to prove a theory but the matter had to be got through and the wonderful imagination of Seshadri enabled him to conjure up possibilities and circumstantial evidence which were enough to turn the tables and to come out successful. In another file I found how magnanimous Seshadri was in recognising the merits of Mr. Shujat Ali, a statutory civilian of the Madras Presidency, who was patronised by the Mysore Government. The records were the veriest mine of reliable information in State matters. It was during this period that I suggested and got sanction for the compilation of a ponderous volume embodying the questions and the answers of the Representative

Assembly for a period of twenty or more years. This work gave me an insight into the wants of the country, the endeavours of the administration to satisfy them and the somewhat ludicrous replies given year after year by the Dewan to the Members of the Representative Assembly. It also convinced me of the waste of time in the Assembly by raising the same points every year without any result.

A GENEROUS HEART

It must, however, be recognised that Seshadri had a generous heart. While stories of high-handedness towards his opponents are not altogether non-existent, yet I know personally that some of the fierce agitators against him were often rewarded with promotion in the State service, and he was prominently wise in not ignoring the justice of the claims of those who criticised him. He had also a strong reserve temper which clothed him as it were with a dignified endurance of all opposition, simply with a smile or a nod of his head.

The following letter of his, dated 19th May, 1890, to Mr. Narasimha Iyengar, the late Durbar Bakshi, contains remarkable evidence.

"I am sorry that my own health is getting worse and worse every day in spite of the great care I take. What with persistent sleeplessness and increased diabetes my strength is fast running down and I feel complete nervous prostration and I am strongly advised to take rest from worrying work and try change of scene and place.

"*In re* poor Clerk, the European Officers are getting up a subscription for his family in a private way. His daughters are to be sent to the R. C. Convent here and his sons to the Lawrence Asylum at Ooty.

"I think we ought to do something similar for poor Costello's family. In Mysore so many are indebted to poor Costello, and ordinary gratitude may be expected to induce many to come forward liberally. Mr. Costello has asked for a pension from Government but that is impossible under the circumstances. Can you not get up a subscription list for circulation quite privately among Costello's friends. If we would in this way get some three or four thousand rupees, it would be some recognition by the Mysore public of poor Costello's services. Something similar ought to be done at Bangalore for poor Arokiam Pillai's family. He has left them houseless and penniless. The Bangalore native community are very deeply grateful to him and they attended the poor man's funeral in such grand sympathetic style as no prince's funeral is attended. I hope the Bangaloreans will show their gratitude in some substantial way, both for Costello and Arokiam. I shall subscribe to the best of my ability as I did for poor Clerk.

"Since writing the above Dr. Macgann has strongly advised me to try change and rest. To-morrow I am proposing to perform Ramaswami's Upanayanam in a very quiet way."

A GOOD FRIEND

Mr. Chentsal Rao was such a good friend of Seshadri that the following letter of his would, I know, be read with great interest. It was addressed to the Darbar Bakshi Narasimha Iyengar.

Bangalore,
18th June, 1893. 1 P.M.

My dear friend,

"I hear that the insignia of K.C.S.I. is to be delivered to the Dewan on the 28th instant at a Darbar held by His Highness the Maharaja. As the Dewan is the Chief Officer in the whole establishment of His Highness and as there is no doubt that the grant of the title is due to the appreciation of the Dewan's services by His Highness the Maharaja, it seems to me that the ceremony should be performed with much *eclat*. Of course, the Dewan cannot take the initiative in the matter as he is personally interested and the only person that ought to take interest is yourself, under the immediate orders of His Highness the Maharaja. The Maharaja must show that when we do our work to his satisfaction, he will not only grant us titles himself but also recommend us to the British Government and bring us to prominence. This would enslave us all to His Highness and make us ready to sacrifice even our lives for him, his country and his people. I think that all the Deputy Commissioners and the chief officers of each district and the heads of departments should all be invited or rather directed to attend the Darbar to witness the grant of the title on

departure from Mysore. Whereas with reference to the Dewan opinion is very keenly divided. Some people are very much averse to his continuance while others are greatly in his favour. I know both of you are intimate friends. I consider it a great administrative mystery how you can both maintain your friendship while from the public point of view, opinions are so keenly divided. May I know how this miracle has been achieved?" Mr. Chentsal Rao replied thus:

"Seshadri and myself fully agree in all our aims. Our object is to help Mysore in its onward march as much as possible. Seshadri has noble instincts and his abilities are indeed very high. It is this that has sustained our friendship all along. But our methods are different. He would carry out his schemes against all opposition and if necessary would at times even throw sand in the eyes of his opponents, whereas my method is always to carry the public with me, to argue with them, to convince them and to progress inch by inch. It is this difference in our methods, though our aim is the same, that accounts for his unpopularity and my popularity."

I then thought that Mr. Chentsal Rao had given me a very valuable lesson in as few words as possible and had defined clearly the difference between autocracy and democracy.

In 1897 I was with Justice Ranade and I had to take his reply to the Dewan's letter in regard to the confidential enquiry carried at the instance of the Dewan referred to by me in the preceding paragraphs. The

Bombay Judge after writing his reply, handed it over to me, before putting it in the envelope and asked me whether it had covered the main points raised by the Dewan. I read through the letter and then returned it without any observations. The Judge looked at me sternly and said "You have not given me your opinion". I replied " It is all right, but". He interrupted me and exclaimed. " It is that but that I am afraid of. I know your general tendency is to raise objections. Please be more explicit and tell me to what that 'But' refers." I replied, " the Dewan in his letter to you begins with 'My dear friend', but in your reply you address him 'My dear Sir'. I do not see why you desire to draw yourself farther away from him while he wants to stand by you as near as possible". The Justice burst into a laughter and asked me "Have you forgotten the *'Desabhimani'* incident? How can I use the term 'friend'? Our spheres of work are different and our views on public matters also differ a great deal. I must only stand at some distance." It was a great intellectual treat to me to hear the short and pithy expressions of the Judge. He had most beautifully summed up one of the main features of the Mysore executive administration and as an illustration had cited a remarkable case which had produced such a revulsion of feeling at the time in the whole of British India. I have quoted the testimony not of the factious cliques opposed to the Dewan, nor the opinions of men who have suffered under his regime, but of those who held him in the highest esteem and who represent the sanest political view of the best minds in India.

GOOD AND EVIL

The illustrious British poet has sung in immortal verses that the good that men do dies with them, while the evil lives after them. I have often pondered over this beautiful philosophical couplet and I have come to the conclusion that it is but a partial truth. Evils are of various kinds and degrees. The recent publication of lectures of the Social Hygiene League and our own life-long observations have proved that physical excess and evils affect not only the men directly involved but also their wives and children and the evil effects of diseases are transmitted to generations to be born and linger for many a long year in the family. I have known some of the ablest of doctors, both Allopathic and Ayurvedic, question the patient in difficult cases whether any of his ancestors on either side for two or three generations had a similar disease. I know a remarkable case of a well-known friend of mine, who suffering from one of the worst ailments in the evening of his life, telling me that his father or grandfather had the same disability, at about the very same period of life. So in regard to purely physical evils prone to be transmitted to one's wife and children, the saying appears to be remarkably true. But in regard to politics and administration, the good and the evil should be weighed in the balance and whichever preponderates will, I think, live longer than the other. Applying this maxim to the case in hand, I have little doubt that if both the administrative evils and the good due to Seshadri Iyer's long administration be weighed in the

scales, the good will preponderate a great deal while the evil has almost disappeared. The good which he had rendered in multifarious ways will live in the hearts of all Indians in general and of all the people of Mysore in particular so long as Mysore remains. It is impossible for any administrator in Mysore to forget the various beneficent schemes and the various acts of the greatest public utility and various administrative enterprises which mark the glory of Sir Seshadri Iyer's illustrious career as the Dewan of Mysore. The hall and the statue which commemorate his name in the Cubbon Park are but feeble though ostentatious commemoration of his merits as an adminstrator. The office records, the despatches of the Government of India and the Public Works and Railways and roads started throughout the State and the Electric Works will for ever continue as many undying reminders of his superior statesmanship and patriotic fervour. And I am glad that Sir Seshadri was fully conscious of how much he owed to the generous impulses of the Mysore Royal family. If Seshadri is in many respects one of the makers of modern Mysore, we cannot forget that it was Mysore which made it possible for Seshadri to carve out such a name and such a distinction for himself. It was a common saying in Madras of those days that, but for the existence of Indian States, men like Seshadri would have had to end their career merely as Deputy Collectors or Sheristadars of the Board of Revenue.

Once I was talking to him about several of the Indian States. Several of the Maharajas in India were his personal friends and used to drive with him and call on him while at Bangalore or at Ootacamund. Once I asked the Dewan how he would have fared if his lot had been cast in any other Native State, and I mentioned to him by name one such, the ruler of which was one of his friends. He had a hearty laugh and candidly said to me that he would not have continued to remain there for more than three months, and added that it was only in Mysore and under the most favourable auspices of its rulers that he was able to achieve what he was able to accomplish. I then felt very happy, as it exactly coincided with my own views, *viz.*, however able a man may be, still without the active support of those who are above him and who have the power to disturb him, nothing very substantial can be achieved. Thus, I take both Mysore and Sir Seshadri were by divine dispensation very well matched and each deserved exceedingly well of the other.

CHAPTER XXX

RAI BAHADUR AMBIL NARASIMIENGAR.

HIS EARLY LIFE

No individual, in my opinion, exercised a more potent and a more effective influence directly or indirectly—by personal efforts and intercession on behalf of, both men and measures in the Mysore State, for nearly more than three generations than this gentleman. Ambil is a village in the taluk of Lalgudi, Trichinopoly District. His ancestors hailed from that place in the pre-rendition days. His elder brother was employed in the Judicial Department in Mysore. He had his education in the Mysore College. He passed the F.A. a fairly high examination in the commencement of our University system. Thus having acquired a domicile, fortune favoured this young adventurous student. Dewan Rangacharlu and the authorities concerned selected him as one of the teachers of the Royal School during the minority of the late Maharaja. By his perseverance, by devotion to his work, and by dint of his ability and originality, he made such a marked impression that he soon won the esteem and confidence of the highest English officers then at the helm of the State and in course of time gradually won the confidence of his royal pupil and rose soon to the responsible and very influential position of Darbar Bakshi, an office which since his

retirement has been confined to the near relations of His Highness. I mention this fact merely to show that so favourable was the impression produced by him in his time both on English Officers, and the royal household that he was considered worthy of a place of such great personal confidence which involved mainly the management of the Palace affairs, regulation of the Darbars and compliance with the personal commands of His Highness.

HIS HEIGHT OF UNPOPULARITY

When I joined the *Hindu* Office, and when Mysore topics came in for incessant discussion, both in the Press and in private conversation, the name of this gentleman often came into unenviable prominence. At that time I had heard a great deal of almost fantastic and wild reports—always unfavourable — about him. I was anxious to make the acquaintance of one so much talked of, but I knew it was a fruitless endeavour. So I left it to Time, the great Master of insoluble problems.

THE EYE-OPENER

It was a great eye-opener to me when in 1894, Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade, wrote to me that he had written to Justice Ramachandra Iyer to intercede on my behalf with the Dewan Sir K. Seshadri Iyer and to Narasimiengar to safeguard my interests in the Palace as far as he could. It at once struck me that one held in such high esteem by our immortal national leader should have some solid redeeming features and all that I had till then heard against him was at best one side

of the story, that the other side, the brighter one, had been hidden from me. Then I suspended my final judgment.

In about August or September, 1894, I went to Bangalore to have my first interview with Sir K. Seshadri Iyer. In the front room where I was shown a seat by an obliging Dalayet (who could easily distinguish between the State servants and a fresh arrival from Madras) I saw in a big chair, a heavy figure, clad in a white long coat, fastened by the old-fashioned tie and a big white laced turban. I went out of the room, and enquired of the peon who my most dignified companion in the room, who never condescended to look at me, was. He closed his mouth with one of his hands—as a token of respect—and almost whispered into my ears that it was the Darbar Bakshi. Immediately I took the seat nearest to him and introduced myself to him, and reminded him of Ranade's letter. He smiled, said he was glad to see me, and added that I should wait and have patience. Before he finished the sentence, some clerk came in all haste and told him that the Dewan Saheb was ready to see him. He left me at once.

My second visit to him was in 1897, after my return from Baroda. I was then struck with wonder to find that he was a genuine friend of the Indian Press; was a great admirer of both G. Subramania Iyer and M. Veeraraghavachariar, was a generous friend and supporter of the Mysore indigenous press, both English and Vernacular; an accurate and almost unerring judge

of men and measures, was a capable and candid critic of all his best friends and a good judge of the defects and merits of the successive Dewans of Mysore; had, in spite of his long courtier training and instincts, developed almost to an incredible extent the extreme democratic spirit; was no respector of persons and was keenly alive to the highest Indian National interests. Then I pondered over my mistake and the prejudices I had unconsciously cultivated by my credulity in listening to one-sided reports against him. From that day till his death I enjoyed the inestimable advantage of his unbounded and unlimited confidence. There was no person, no subject too sacred for us to discuss about frankly and with perfect freedom from all prepossessions or predilections for or against. Even religion was not excluded from our evening debates. He was splendid in his candour, and unsurpassed in his sincerity.

HIS DEVOTION TO THE ROYAL FAMILY

His devotion to the Mysore Royal family was indeed intense. I asked him once, "Why did you resign your office in 1895? You are yet strong enough to perform your duties?" At once, tears began to drop from both his eyes, almost unconsciously, and wiping them off with his handkerchief, he replied, "You expect me to continue in office after my master's demise! If I had not my Brahminical faith in God and a sincere belief in the evil effects of violence to one's own life, I should have demonstrated my devotion to my sovereign after

the Japanese fashion." I was visibly touched, but yet the journalistic instinct persisted in me. I said "I revere your devotion. But do you know there is another version? Your enemies told me that you were not wanted in the present administration. The devotion to your late sovereign should have, some people say, impelled you to serve His Highness' son and successor with equal earnestness". He warmed himself up and replied: That I am prepared to do without pay and position. You do not know what depth of loyalty impels me yet to the present Maharaja and the Yuvaraja. Let people say what they like. I must prefer my own sentiments to outside adverse comment. My official garb which I began to wear with His late Highness' accession I could not continue to wear after His Highness' death. Then you are yet a stranger to Mysore politics. I desired to see an Ursu gentleman installed in my place. You do not know how I have trained my successor in office. There should be a limit to personal aggrandisement. Why do I want high pay and position? I have no family to maintain. My only son is an imbecile. I have made enough provision for my wife. I wish to devote the remainder of my life to such public good as I am capable of. Please remember no one knows better my sentiments of loyalty to the Mysore throne than their Highnesses the Maharaja and the Yuvaraja". I know this is the absolute truth. I was convinced of the sincerity of the above views from the opinions of some high officers of the State to whom I had access and of my intimate friends in the Mysore Press.

That he was contemplating retirement 2 or 3 years before it actually occurred is proved by the following letter which I found now in his records handed over to me:

Fern Hill, Ootacamund,
19th May, 1892.

" My dear Sir,

We leave Ooty tomorrow. The stay up here has been very pleasant and enjoyable. Colonel Campbell is now able to move out pretty freely. He was out yesterday to see the races on the Cockrel's Course.

The pleasures of solitude have been very great for me on the hill tops and in the *sholas*; and they are on the increase. Milk and fruit diet has agreed with me thoroughly and has become very enjoyable. These and other circumstances put together, the present seems to be a most favourable time for me to retire.

I have now put in a little over 28 years of service, and during this period, I have not taken more than twice or thrice casual leave of two or three days each time. So I am now entitled to a furlough of two years, if kindly granted. I have been most fortunate in enjoying uniformly very kind and considerate treatment at His Highness the Maharaja's hands and of yourself; and I have always tried to do my best and at times in the early period, with unflinching courage. I have also done my duty as a citizen to the public to my own satisfaction. I have personally submitted to His Highness the Maharaja that I would cheerfully retire,

if permitted; and if you will kindly help me in the matter, I shall feel ever thankful. Next to Sir James Gordon and Mr. Rangacharlu, you know me best.

* * * *

I have deliberately written this letter; and beg you will give it the same kind consideration as Sir James would; and help to get me a pension the peculiar nature of my past services would deserve.

I remain,
Yours very sincerely,
A. Narasimiengar.

To

K. Seshadri Iyer, Esq., C.S.I.,
Dewan of Mysore.

INTERESTING ANECDOTES

He took a great delight in narrating and re-narrating a number of times, several interesting anecdotes of persons high and low in Mysore. He made over to me also a few of the old records that remained with him. The bulk of them he had destroyed long before our acquaintance had developed into warm friendship. These anecdotes and records I am utilising as occasion arises in appropriate places. I may here publicly acknowledge that the anecdotes I narrated in connection with the Rendition of Mysore and the remark of the European Officer, as well as the letter I quoted from the Bengalee gentleman, emanated from Mr. Narasimiengar.

HIS INTEREST IN FEMALE EDUCATION

Mr. Narasimiengar may aptly be termed the father and the greatest patron of Female Education in Mysore. The Mysore Maharani's College owes a great deal to the paternal interest and heavy personal pecuniary sacrifices he made during his somewhat long and eventful life. One day I asked him details of all the contributions in money made by him from the commencement of his life till that time—10 years before his death—purely for encouraging the education of women. He gave the figures and I added them. They mounted up to the highly respectable figure of two lakhs. Please note, that this was from his own earnings, apart from State grants, and grants from the members of the royal family. It was this fervour on behalf of female education that made Mr. Narasimiengar a great favourite in all the Presidency towns and made distinguished men in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta his friends. He gave from his own pay and pension, scholarships to deserving female students and widows, anxious to prosecute their studies or to get training as nurses and midwives. He laboured hard to establish the Mysore Widows' Home, to train the inmates in the management of the institution and in the establishment of a hostel for lady students. He took a personal interest all his life in the progress and development of the Maharani's College. All the live-long day and till 10 or 11 at night, he was available for consultation and aid to forlorn women of all ages, young and old, and no member of the gentler sex that came to him with young fatherless children and

with weeping eyes, ever, went back empty-handed. No father could have been kinder to his own children than this selfless soul to suffering humanity. One of his favourite, oft repeated sayings to me, was: "If India is ever to be saved and if it is ever to rise high in the scale of Nations, it should be through the instrumentality, through the culture, the devotion and the enlightened sacrifices of our women in general and widows in particular. That is the most sacred task I am engaged in".

He was the life-long Secretary to the Devraj Bahadur Fund mostly devoted to Female Education. He took a lively interest in the Mysore Exhibition and under his personal supervision, trained female students and school mistresses in cooking with electric stoves and furnishing a large variety of exhibits.

The great and famous educationist, W. A. Porter whose revered memory is still cherished with veneration in South India, in the evening of his distinguished career, after a sad disappointment at his most legitimate claims having been overlooked by the Madras Government, was for a time in Mysore, first as tutor and then as the Private Secretary to His Highness the late Maharaja. He had a high opinion of Mr. Narasimiengar and at his request he used to examine the Maharani's Girls' School. I have with me a short note in his own beautiful hand which runs thus:

"Some days ago I examined the 1st class of the Maharani's Girls' School in Arithmetic.

The examination embraced the simple and compound rules, the greatest common measure and easy problems.

" The results were very satisfactory, and with very slight exceptions the whole class showed a very thorough knowledge of what they had done. I was equally pleased with the accuracy of their work and the intelligence they showed in dealing with questions in the nature of problems".

Mysore, 18th March, 1884. W. A. Porter.

He would at times go out of his way to encourage lady tutors and students. When their male guardians or relatives were employed in distant places or had no means of living, he would purely for the sake of female education, recommend the transfer or appointment of such male relations or guardians.

A BENGALEE FRIEND

The following letter written to him by a Bengalee friend of his is worth publication and shows how in distant parts of India he had admirers.

Indian Mirror Office,

Calcutta, 21st April, 1877.

" My dear Mr. Narasimiengar,

Many, many thanks for your kind letter of the 11th March. It seems that you still remember me, which must really be very kind of you. I have shown your letter to my brother, and he asks me to tell you that he is very much obliged to you for your kind mention of him. You may rest assured that what you call your

"disrespectful conduct" in not seeing him at Delhi is not so much as thought of by him.

You perhaps do not know that I spent the last year at Jeypore as Principal of the Maharaja's College. I could not stay there long as I had an attack of an illness called by the doctors by the name of sciatica. I am now again in the city of palaces literally drowned in work. I think you now receive the *"Indian Mirror"*. How do you like its present size—its manner and its matter? Some time ago there appeared in it a laudatory article on Colonel Malleson. Have you seen it? I think the Colonel was badly treated. We should, many of us, so much like to see Mysore and its great historic sights. But the distance is the great obstacle. Yet there is a God who binds us all together and if there had not been a common cause among us, could we have known and fraternised with each other? So that even if distance separates us, we are still one in heart and one in spirit and are nearer to each other than our nearest neighbours who live near our doors. Do you not think so?

You will perhaps be glad to hear two bits of news relating to my brother. The first is that he delivered a lecture the other day at the Town Hall where Lord Lytton was present. The lecture was delivered at the special request of His Excellency. The lecture in question has been published. The second is that my brother has received a most gracious letter from Her Majesty through her Private Secretary expressing her congratulation upon the establishment of the Albert Hall in Calcutta. Her Majesty's interest in India is also clearly

expressed in the letter alluded to. The Queen considers my brother's opinion of the Delhi Assemblage as "very valuable." I must now close, and with best regards, believe me to remain.

Always yours very truly,
Krishnabihari Sen.

LETTER FROM AN ENGLISH OFFICER

Mr. Narasimiengar had a large number of friends among the higher European Officers. However, only one letter written to him by one of his English friends, is with me and is fit for publication.

Narkhanda,
29th November.

"My dear Narasimiyengar,

Your letter of 15th November reached me only on the 26th for I am at present in the interior from Simla and have been beyond the reach of the Postal Department.

Your former letter also duly reached me but you will understand that I have had little time for letter writing in return—besides it really is almost too cold. I have this instant looked at my thermometer placed outside in the verandah and find it between 28 degrees and 29 degrees. What it may go down to in the course of the night it is hard to say.

Yesterday we breakfasted at a height of 10,000 feet or so.

The extreme fineness and dryness of the weather and air make this great cold quite bearable and in fact it is very enjoyable.

"The view of the external snows is fine beyond description—and altogether the experience of the Himalayas at this time of year is one which I would not miss for anything.

"I am very glad to get your good account of all at Mysore as far as concerns the school and especially His Highness and am exceedingly pleased to hear that a few of His Highness's school fellows are to accompany him—it would have been a thousand pities otherwise—and I agree with your views on that head.

"The famine is indeed a fearful calamity. The worst fears regarding it seem to have been justified.

"I trust that His Highness is well and doing well in every way. Your account of him seems to say so. Give my compliments to His Highness and say that I look forward with much pleasure to meeting him at Delhi and that I trust his trip may be a very pleasant one to him. I feel sure that he will enjoy it and it will be a great pleasure to me to accompany him to many interesting sights and places.

'I hope to be at Delhi on the 7th December'.

Yours very truly,
Fred. M. Wilson".

HIS SOCIAL QUALITIES

Mr. Narasimiengar kept himself in close touch with his orthodox caste-men and the high priest of his sectarian *mutt* at Mysore. At the same time, he freely dined with members of the other communities, and in the matter of dinner, he associated himself in select company with this most advanced countrymen. His home was a most hospitable one. Visitors from distant Provinces, like the illustrious Mr. D. Karve, the founder of the Poona Women's University, and the Widows' Home, were his guests. Between Bengalis Bombayites, Madrasees, and Mysoreans he made no difference. He would often mention to me with sentiments of pardonable pride that he was one of the earliest Mysore officers to detect years ago signs of great genius and great patriotism in the then plain Mr. (now Sir) M. Visveswarayya. He used to tell me that once when Mr. Visveswarayya had come to Mysore as a young officer from Bombay, he took a great deal of interest in him, explained to him the details of management of the Maharani's Girls' School, invited him to visit it and to give him the benefit of his advice. Nothing delighted him so much as the coming into official prominence in Mysore of Mr. Visveswarayya whom he had long, long ago, spotted out as one of the best of Mysoreans.

IMPARTIAL JUDGMENT

A most praiseworthy feature of Mr. Narasimiengar's admirable impartiality and independence of views,

was that, though he was regarded as the most intimate friend of eminent officers like Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, and Mr. Justice Ramchandra Iyer, no one was a more unrelenting critic of their demerits, than Mr. Narasimiengar. Neither was he at any time unwilling to give due credit to the good points in eminent Mysoreans like Sir P. N. Krishnamuthy, Kolar Krishna Iyengar, H. V. Najunda Iyya and others. Mr. Narasimiengar was in one sense an all-India man. He took genuine delight in depicting to me in vivid colours his views about Sasipada Banerjee, Ranade and some of the Bombay Bania and Bhatia millionaires and the foremost men of Madras and Travancore. Another praiseworthy feature in him was his open-handed liberality in assisting struggling graduates in various departments. He would give them some literary work of tuition and reward them liberally.

He never forgot his humble origin. Once he told me that his ancestors had the privilege of sacred service in a Vaishnava temple in his village, that it was hereditary occupation, that he had a lien yet on temple service, that whenever political intrigues or disappointments assailed him during the reign of his late Highness, he ventured often to tell those in whose hands final power lay that he would at any time resign his office and revert to his favourite temple service wherein the pay was exceedingly poor, a few rupees a year. That would suffice for him.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It was his rare merit that in addition to retaining the goodwill, all his life, of the Royal family and all sections of the Mysore public, he retained the confidence of successive British Residents and all British officers in the State.

Women, wealth and influence in high quarters are like the smouldering fire. No one who has to deal with such mighty forces incessantly can ever escape the tongue of malice. Of this unpopularity and of the risks they involve he had also in abundance. But after his retirement his popularity began to increase, and friend and foe had universally increasing regard for him. He drew his pension for nearly more than two decades, devoted it to Women's education, took an active interest in Mysore and Indian affairs and left behind him after his death—a name fragrant on the whole with a life nobly spent. He was a self-made man, he rose from a humble parentage to a position of equality with Judges and Dewans, and what is more to the point, did greater good to a large number of suffering women and young female children, than any other Mysore officer I have known or heard of.

CHAPTER XXXI

SIR P. N. KRISHNAMOORTHY

The subject of this brief sketch had some singular advantages. He was a lineal descendant of the famous Purniah who served as Prime Minister during one of the most troublous periods of Mysore history namely, three distinguished sovereigns like Hyder Ali, Tippu Sultan and Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodayar III. Purniah, a Madhva Brahmin emigrant from the neighbouring district of Coimbatore, by the force of his superior intellect, indomitable courage and unwavering faith in God, rose to the highest political and administrative eminence and retained in full his power and position for a long period under the most eventful political transformations such as rarely occur in any country.

This illustrious ancestry in itself, coupled with the possession of the Yelandur Jaghir which is in the nature of a big permanently settled and inalienable Zemindari, was a great asset to Sir P. N. Krishnamoorthy. But he had in addition his own self-acquired claims of a high order. He was a graduate in law of the Madras University and had worked his way up from the ranks of the service in two important departments, the Revenue and the Judicial. His career as a Judge of the Chief Court covered him with glory in the public estimation. The bold stand he took up in his

judgments in some important cases is still cherished with great respect. One of his lifelong ambitions was to become the Dewan of Mysore and thus emulate the efforts of his great ancestor. He had behind him, in this very natural aspiration, the enthusiastic support of a large number of his countrymen. But in the inscrutable wisdom of Providence, the more ardent Sir P. N. Krishnamoorthy and his compatriots grew in their endeavour, the more distant appeared the goal. The unusually long period of the stewardship of Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar, 18 years—almost drove Sir P. N. Krishnamoorthy and his adherents to the very brink of despair. Added to this was the then very annoying presence in the field of a very powerful rival in the service to contest Sir P. N. Krishnamoorthy's supremacy in public estimation in the fascinating personality of Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao. It was at this juncture that Sir Roper Lethbridge came to Calcutta from England on a short visit and made a name for himself in journalistic gymnastics. The Dewanship of Mysore excited for months an unusual degree of public interest far beyond the boundaries of the State ; in Bombay and Calcutta—not to speak of Madras—newspapers were every day publishing contradictory telegrams.

Colonel (subsequently Sir) Donald Robertson who was the British Resident at the time, was like the head of a patriarchal family, advising his naughty and clamorous grown-up wards, giving admonitions and encouragement to all of them; silencing them for the moment with hopes, regulating the distribution of power

and patronage with an adroitness which was truly admirable. A Resident of a different temperament might have taken too seriously the party bickerings and the vehement denunciations found in semi-official and confidential communications and might have marred the prospects of some one or more of the chief combatants.

But Sir Donald took a sort of paternal interest in all of them and encouraged the aspirations of each to the best of his diplomatic skill. He had the foresight to see which way public sentiment and considerations of seniority prevailed. The choice of Her Highness the Maharani Regent who had the final voice in the matter was also in the same direction. And the result was Sir P. N. Krishnamoorthy assumed charge of the administration amidst the acclamations of a long expectant public. No Dewan could have begun his career under more favourable auspices. In fact the exuberance of public imagination and excitement reached such a high pitch that some ardent men told me that in their view, from that period the Dewanship would be hereditary in the family. At that time, it sounded somewhat strange to me, but after I came to Central India the suggestion has lost half its novelty as I found in these parts even to-day families of hereditary Dewans and Phadnis, in the enjoyment of Jaghirs but without at times either office or pay.

THE PARTY SYSTEM

During the three administrations of Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar and his two immediate successors what was then half in contempt and half in earnest, dubbed as the

party system of Government was prevalent in Mysore. Our party systems are based on other considerations than those of principles or policies as applicable to present public needs. Human nature invents artificial reasons for preferences or prejudices. In the difficult art of Government, those who agree or may be expected to agree or who have Provincial or communal affinities for such agreement are supposed to form a party for safeguarding mutual interests, for overlooking mutual faults and in fact for forming a mutual admiration society bent chiefly on exploitation for self and for walking over the heads of their competitors for official advancement. This system has its own peculiar advantages and at times horrible disadvantages. At the same time a great deal of artificiality gradually crept into the system and exposed the nakedness of its fundamental foundations. To illustrate this I may mention that amongst the ardent followers of Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar and V. P. Madhava Rao, there were a good number of genuine Mysoreans, born and bred up in the confines of the State and among the supporters of Sir P. N. Krishnamoorthy there were many who had migrated in their own lives from the Tanjore and the Coimbatore Districts. Sir P. N. Krishnamoorthy and his brother as well as some other prominent Mysoreans, who were supposed to jealously guard against the unwelcome intrusion of the Madrasees, freely made marital alliances with Madrasees and thus managed to alienate a good portion of their wealth from the Mysore soil.

DURBARS

There was then in vogue the exceedingly vicious system of morning and evening Durbars in the gardens or spacious grounds of these high officers where the district officers leading non-officials and others used to wait to catch a glimpse of the august personage to exchange a few words with him and if possible to better their own prospects. The ludicrousness of these unrecognised and in some respects exceedingly humiliating Durbars reached the climax when some of us who were regularly everyday there were often accused of not having been there or were found fault for impartially going to the personages who disliked each other! What was demanded of us was blind faith in one only and rank hatred towards the heads of antagonistic parties. Those of us who could not by constitution or conviction fall in with such extreme views often came in for great trouble. I was a good deal thankful when with the Dewanship of Pradhan Siromani Ananda Rao, the party government as well as the morning and evening Durbars came to a close.

PERSONAL MERITS

Sir P. N. Krishnamoorthy left to himself was very kind and considerate to all. His judicial training was also against hasty decisions. He was genuinely interested in husbanding the resources of the State and having at all times a good balance in favour of the State in the Treasury. He gave a shape to the great co-operative movement and created the nucleus of a permanent department.

HIS ENVIRONMENTS

But his misfortune over which he could not get over was, he was surrounded by some intimate relations and officers who misled him and always tried to obstruct him by their advice against his persevering in his own instinctive inclinations. The Mysore party, in its general sense, soon saw that the era of overflowing general prosperity which they had anticipated had not dawned on them. The Dewan's popularity began to diminish, the numerical strength of those clamorous sections which deemed themselves neglected by their own patron began to increase. To the man in the street, the administration became insipid and was just as good or as bad as any other administration. The Dewan's peace of mind and its equilibrium was a good deal disturbed and put to the severest test by hostile criticisms in the indigenous Mysore Press itself. It was at such a juncture that the Dewan in an unguarded moment and in a fit of temper asked the late Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar (the Joint Editor of the *Mysore Standard* and subsequently on the staff of 'The *Tribune*' of Lahore), to go out of the Representative Assembly sittings. This arbitrary act sealed for ever his popularity among the people of Mysore. From that day more and more fierce grew the criticisms against him till at last "The *Mysore Standard*" published a petition to His Highness the Maharaja as emanating from the trees standing in the public road adjoining the Dewan's residence about his administrative acts. It provoked roars of laughter.

MR. M. VENKATAKRISHNIAH

This gentleman was then as now one of the most outspoken critics of the Government. Dewans have come and Dewans have gone. But from the days of Rangacharlu up to the present day Mr. Venkatakrishniah has served Mysore as a standing opposition to Government. Though he was regarded as the strongest pillar of the Mysore party, I found the pillar was showing signs of disruption. He had to go to Travancore to see his eldest son who was then studying in the Law College there and when he returned to Mysore I asked him how V. P. Madhava Row was getting on. He burst forth in admiration of his success at Travancore and added that the public should endeavour to bring him back to Mysore again. And he actually gave vent to his sentiments in a leading article in his paper to the painful astonishment of the yet lingering adherents of the Dewan. I have been acquainted with him from the time I was in "*The Hindu*" office and from that day to this I have found in him the same adamantine and the same unyielding spirit. No domestic misfortunes, no public threats, no pecuniary losses could make him swerve from what he believes rightly or wrongly to be his convictions. I have many times differed from him, but I have always had the highest regard and the highest reverence for his unselfish sacrifices. As an educationist, as a Member of the Assembly, as a Municipal Councillor and as a journalist, all combined—he has served his country whole-heartedly. No man is perfect and Mr. Venkatakrishniah must have, as all of us have, his

own foibles. His lifelong services are worthy of commemoration by the people of Mysore. What has always appealed to me is his simplicity and his genuine interest in the poor and lowly. It was in Sir P. N. Krishnamoorthy's administration that my admiration for Mr. Venkatakrishniah grew immensely though in the public eye we were ranged in somewhat opposite directions.

When Sir P. N. Krishnamoorthy's term of office of 5 years was over and when he had to retire, there was a singular phenomenon which has not since been repeated. He and both his colleagues in the Council were bundled up simultaneously, usually each of them retires singly and not all jointly.

However, to my mind, Sir P. N. Krishnamoorthy's elevation is a standing vindication of the claims of Mysoreans and an example of the unerring generosity of the Mysore Royal family.

CHAPTER XXXII

V. P. MADHAVA RAO, C.I.E.

As a character study and as a life full of surprising successes, the lives of few Indians in the official world of the last century are so inspiring and so encouraging as that of this, our venerable countryman. By his own efforts and with the aid of unseen friendly destiny, he achieved remarkable administrative feats such as jumping suddenly from Mysore to Travancore, from Travancore to Mysore, from Mysore to Baroda and subsequently to London as the representative of the Indian National Congress.

During the years 1896 to 1904, I was in close touch with Madhava Rao in the Mysore State service.

PRIMARY IMPELLING FORCES

I have for the past many years during odd intervals of leisure endeavoured my best to analyse the basic principles which might have actuated Madhava Rao all his life and which ought to have contributed to his remarkable advancement. That he is one of the striking characters of our times nobody can deny. What were the qualities and accomplishments which pushed him up for State and public appreciation and approbation? My answer is, it is a fortuitous combination of the following elements: (1) an attractive and impre-

eminently striking personality which cannot but evoke sentiments of regard and esteem at first sight; (2) an innate passion for promoting the welfare of all classes of people without distinction of creed or caste or provincial narrow-mindedness; (3) open-handed generosity in rewarding merit and devotion; (4) a supreme effort at all times to preserve a high degree of self-respect and self-predominance which could never brook contradiction or opposition or humiliation at the hands of Indians or Europeans, the Prince or the peasant; (5) a firm faith in frequent publicity of his work and aims; (6) an inflexible determination to defeat his opponents however powerful; (7) a somewhat inexplicable combination of democratic principles and of social equality in talk and manners with autocratic methods of carrying out his administrative improvements and schemes. In social life Madhava Rao combined in himself a desire to throw his lot with social reform and modern ways of life with an insatiable desire to keep himself in the good graces of orthodox priesthood and the highest communal spiritual heads.

PERMANENT MEMORIALS

Madhava Rao has left permanent memorials of his administrative genius in the reorganisation of the Mysore Police force which stood at the highest point of efficiency in his regime as Inspector-General of Police, in the extensions of Basavangudi, Malleswaram and Shankarpur founded by him in Bangalore with the strong support of Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar and the Royal family; in the palatial building of the Shankara Matt

and in the recollections and memories of the people of the Shimoga district as one of the best Deputy Commissioners that district has ever had. I had a remarkable illustration of the last item in 1925, after 4 years of my retirement and when Mr. Madhava Rao's career in Mysore had terminated 16 years previous to it. I was travelling to Shimoga from Bangalore and had as my companion in the train, a highly educated taluk officer of that district. I asked him about the condition of water-supply in his taluk and he answered that the only well in his headquarters which never failed to supply drinking water, was the one dug at Mr. Madahava Rao's orders during the time he presided over the district. What a pleasing testimony to the everlasting good which district officers can confer on the rural population by personal attention to the everyday wants and what a striking proof of the gratitude of the Indian populace towards their official benefactors.

In Travancore, Madhava Rao has left many permanent landmarks which will for ever keep his memory green, as in the case of his cherished namesake and predecessor Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao who was in many respects the maker of modern Travancore.

THE FIRST OFFICIAL CRISIS

In about the year 1901 when Sir P. N. Krishnamurthy was raised to the Dewanship of Mysore, Madhava Rao had a great crisis in his official life. His life-long rival had defeated him in the fierce race, which extended over more than a decade. During the previous several

years in the Regency Council, he was mostly in the glorious minority of one and had to put up with all the disappointments which such a minority inevitably leads to in a constitutional system of Government—at times relieved only by the support extended by the Dewan or the Resident, Colonel Sir Donald Robertson.

On the day on which Sir P. N. Krishnamurthy took charge as Dewan, I was in Mysore with Madhava Rao on duty. He felt the personal humiliation so keenly and it seemed to me that his proud Maratha temper could no longer stand the strain. The situation was so irksome that his temper could no longer bend but it was to break. That night he almost resolved to throw up the reins of his office and to seek the freedom which retirement from official subordination could bestow on him. But there was a kindly higher destiny to guide him. He was not allowed to have his own way. That night he was disturbed till 1 o'clock and the considerations which ought to weigh with him at such a crisis were most frankly put before him in the privacy of his own room, in an atmosphere of a cool and pleasant Mysore midnight, in his palatial official residence. To make the story effective I shall put in the first person the substance of the whole conversation.

"There can be no just grievance against the elevation of Krishnamurthy. He is the Senior Member of Council. By education, he is a graduate in law. In service he has had varied experience, working as a Deputy Commissioner and Judge of the Chief Court. In pedigree he stands unrivalled, being the premier

nobleman of the State. By what considerations his undoubted claims for Dewanship could be overlooked, passes one's comprehension. The same considerations of seniority and approved service which stood so well in his case, would naturally operate in your case also when the time for it arrives. A soldier in battle does not desert the field to the enemy. To leave the field entirely to Krishnamurthy and to take away the opposition, constitutional as it is, to his administration will weaken the hands of all those who have stood by you so long and who have consequently incurred his bitter displeasure. All Administrations thrive more by a reasoned opposition than by mere servile obedience in all its ranks. After all, in your retirement, you may not be able to do half the good to the people which you may do while in office. High offices give opportunities for public good which are rarely found in retirement especially to those who have been in harness and who have not been trained from early life in non-official public service. Retirement is always at your option, but why choose this extremely unpropitious hour for it and why leave behind a feeling of bitterness that we cannot stand with composure the well-deserved victory of a more fortunate rival"? Madhava Rao's sincere scorn for compromises was then as strong as ever. However his ultimate decision that night was not to precipitate his career, but to wait with hope. It was this patience and his willingness to abide by the opposition view which was instrumental in a great measure for his subsequent unprecedented official transformations.

STRANGE ADMINISTRATIVE DEVICES

Madhava Rao's fighting temperament, coupled with the appreciation of his outstanding abilities in the public mind, led to the adoption, by the authorities at the helm of State affairs, of strange devices, which, looking backwards now seem, to be most incongruous, though at the time, in the spirit of party squabbles, many of us acclaimed them as very essential. The first was the division of the eight districts into Western and Eastern and the conferment of the powers of supervision on Krishnamurthy and Madhava Rao of each of the four districts. This arrangement led to a great deal of confusion and delay as was inevitable. The second was the creation of the office of the Revenue Commissioner, specially at the time when it was created. Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar in his inimitable egoism had made a loud protestation to his friends that whoever may succeed him as Dewan, it would be found that the nucleus of all future improvements had been indicated by him during his long stewardship and nothing wholly new could be projected by his successors. I mention this, merely to show that the idea of having a Revenue Commissioner had been started at one time several years previously and he had also fixed on Dewan Bahadur Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar, as the most qualified to hold it, with the approval of His Highness the late Maharaja, but at the last moment, the appointment fell through as Mr. Iyengar proposed certain guarantees which the Durbar could not agree to. One argument against the creation of the office was that it would lower the prestige and power of

the Dewan by taking away from him the direct supervision of the largest and most important Revenue earning department of the State when the revenue officers had vested in them powers over all other departments. What was still strange was, the deputation of Madhava Rao to the Bombay Presidency, for studying the Revenue System there while all his successors in that office had no such opportunity, though Madhava Rao, as a Deputy Commissioner, had a high reputation and perhaps could not learn much that was unknown to him. A still stranger step was the combination of the office of the Revenue Commissioner with that of the Senior Member of Council and Madhava Rao was the very first and last personage to enjoy the benefits of such a queer combination. However the temperamental divergences between the Dewan and the Member were so bitter that by the year 1904 the gulf between the two had become almost unbridgeable and at times it appeared to the casual observer that a complete deadlock was often inevitable. When this state of affairs reached a culminating point, it became indispensable to separate the combatants if administrative equillibrium were to be restored. I have reasons to believe that each of them received a good warning from higher quarters to that effect. It was at this juncture that the Dewanship of Travancore fell vacant by the retirement of Dewan Bahadur Krishnaswami Rao. Travancore was then attached to the Madras Government and the Dewanship was regarded as a prize for the most distinguished officers of the Madras Uncovenanted Civil Service.

Madhava Rao had no contact with the Madras Government or the Travancore Durbar. Mysore has always been a distinct political entity by itself with direct correspondence with the Government of India through the Hon'ble the British Resident. By what strange logic Lord Ampthill suggested Madhava Rao's name to His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore and how the nomination was accepted is beyond the view of ordinary political prevision. The only possible explanation is that Madhava Rao's remarkable success as Plague Commissioner had produced such a strong impression on the Madras Government and that Government found him the most efficient administrator. There was also the fact that Colonel Robertson was a warm admirer of Madhava Rao and he was in touch with the Madras Government. The announcement of the appointment of Madhava Rao elicited the approbation of the public in Mysore, Madras and Travancore.

A THIRD CRISIS

By the year 1906, the affairs of Travancore during the regime of Madhava Rao had attained a degree of publicity unknown till then in the annals of the State. The beneficent measures which he started made him immensely popular, while the estrangement of views in some matters between the Palace and the Dewan, of which the Madras press of those days contained almost everyday exciting information, began to cause alarm in responsible circles. At about this time, I happened to have an interview with Lord Ampthill, who had just then returned to Madras after having acted as Viceroy.

His Excellency sent for me merely as the author of a book "Future of India" which I had published under a nom-de-plume. His Excellency desired to identify the author and have a talk with him. I readily assented to disclose myself. In the conversation which I had, I was led to believe that His Excellency would be glad to see Madhava Rao in a different sphere of usefulness. But in Mysore all hopes of Madhava Rao's return had almost been abandoned, though I am aware that at the time of his departure to Travancore he was informed that his absence from Mysore would not stand in the way of the consideration of his claims. There was the eternal party strife and it gave us no hope. Madhava Rao had gone to Travancore for five years and hardly two of which had passed. Thus, no one could think there was a chance of his being recalled, though most of his adherents in the State were anxious to have him back. As Krishnamurthi's retirement began to draw nearer and nearer, public anxiety as to the successor rose to a high pitch. One of the staunchest friends of Madhava Rao, who was almost everyday thinking of it, was the late A. Narasimha Iyengar, retired Durbar Bakshi. I asked him one evening how the political barometer stood. He was in raptures and told me that so far as human calculation can be trusted, Madhava Rao was sure to be re-called by Mysore. I enquired how he had arrived at that conclusion. He said that he had met that afternoon T. R. A. Thumboo Chettiar who was held in high esteem in the highest quarters. Between Mr. Chettiar and Mr. Madhava Rao,

there was not much love lost while they were in the Council. But after the departure of Madhava Rao to Travancore, Mr. Chettiar on a full review of the then existing situation, had expressed his opinion that Madhava Rao's reversion to Mysore would be the best solution. Mr. Chettiar's pre-sentiment was almost a prophetic one.

CONCLUSION

The three years of his Dewanship at Mysore was full of excitement. The Press Regulation, the Mining Regulation, and the vetoing of the elctions of M. Venkatakrishnayya and D. Venkatramiah, evoked considerable hostile criticism and his retirement from Mysore in April, 1909, had a dramatic touch about it, and was as sudden as his departure to and return from Travancore. The subsequent invitation he had from so enlightened and far-famed a prince like His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda, was a fitting closing triumph of a wonderfully varied administrative career. His eventful deputation to England on behalf of the Congress at that age of his, captivated the public imagination and restored him to public confidence and his courageous expression of his views raised him to the status of a non-official leader of public opinion in all-India. His entire career commencing from the time he began his life as a schoolmaster in Bangalore, is a unique one and each development as it proceeded from one stage to another was very much out of the common rut. It demonstrates eloquently the affinity which exists at times

between one's own supreme efforts and the intervention of a beneficent Almighty in mundane affairs. To me Madhava Rao's life is the most convincing realization of the old adage "God helps those who help themselves".

CHAPTER XXXIII

PRADHAN SHIROMANI T. ANAND RAO, C.I.E.

This nobleman, the eldest son of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, worked his way up unostentatiously to the height of the Prime Ministership of the premier Hindu State in India, though he was devoid of all ambition and of all efforts to ingratiate himself either in the good graces of the authorities or the public. His whole life was a remarkably detached one. The entire life of Anand Rao is in many respects a strong contrast to those of the ordinary run of distinguished Indians.

At the very beginning I may state, it was a curious combination that he was the son of a Dewan, a son-in-law of a Dewan, (Rama Rao of Travancore) and himself a Dewan of no ordinary State. His wife once declared with pardonable pride to a lady friend of hers, that she had been specially favoured by Providence in having been the daughter of a Dewan, daughter-in-law of a Dewan and the wife of a Dewan.

Ananda Rao before he entered the Mysore service was a tutor to the Prince of Travancore for a time and he was awarded a pension. This fact he mentioned to me with pride. It will be interesting for the public to know that the following were his life-long characteristics:

(1) An unsurpassed sense of absolute loyalty under all circumstances to the Sovereign with an instinct of not recognising any other external authority except under accepted conventions and with the sanction of his own Sovereign.

(2) A rigid adherence to routine carried often to extreme limits of not receiving reports or officers after the office time.

(3) The established habit of his, of not admitting to his presence any one—be he an officer or a near relative or his own medical attendant in his residence without previous intimation to him in the shape of ringing a bell, specially provided for the purpose at the threshold and getting a response from him.

(4) An absolute indifference to what his colleagues or superiors or the general public thought of him or his work.

(5) Absence of favouritism in the distribution of patronage and a strange disposition which makes neither enemies nor friends nor partisans in an active official career extending over several decades.

(6) The habit of voracious and intensive reading of standard books of the day.

(7) A well-disciplined daily life in which from morning to evening, the routine of work and obligations, from the morning constitutional walk till retirement to bed at night, was rigidly kept up at times even to the dismay and despair of his friends and relatives. In fact in my whole conscious experience of nearly half-a-century, I cannot mention any other name to

match that of his in the above respects, among the vast range of my acquaintances in all parts of India.

HIS FIRST WELCOME TO ME

His first welcome to me in the office room when in 1904 he succeeded V. P. Madhava Rao, as Revenue Commissioner, was a very pleasant and agreeable surprise to me. I was then only the Manager of the Office. He accosted me thus, "I have heard of you, since the time you were in the '*Hindu*' office. I requested the Government twice to place your services under me as Census Commissioner. But they did not. I am glad now to work with you". Then for the first time, I felt, that though at times, I had been subjected to hardships owing to my supposed connection with the press and my uncontrollable faith in journalistic adventures, there was one in high office, who though he had never identified himself with any party or press, with whom my past journalistic career was a passport officially for esteem and confidence.

I remember even to-day how a Dewan of Mysore once told me that when he desired to post me as an Assistant Secretary to Government, his then Chief Secretary demurred with the remark that he did not want to have a journalist under him as one of his Assistants. Ananda Rao was the very reverse of this Chief Secretary.

STUBBORN PERSISTENCE IN HIS OWN METHODS

When Ananda Rao was Deputy Commissioner of Mysore, there was a very regrettable and somewhat

exciting strike in Mysore City. Subsequently after his transfer, from that office, one of his friends pointed out to Ananda Rao, what he considered to be his faults in dealing with the situation at Mysore and giving cause for such a strike. Ananda Rao was not in the least affected. His reply was "I shall act in the same way as I did now if I again find myself in a similar predicament".

He was generally averse to moving on tour but when under pressure of Government, he left Bangalore he would not return for months together though he was urgently called by telegram.

Once the Dewan had asked him by a special D. O. to give him the benefit of his specific recommendations on an important matter connected with survey settlement. Ananda Rao, in response to repeated reminders, prepared an elaborate and a very erudite and scholarly despatch, called me to his room, gave his draft and asked my opinion. After fully reading through the manuscript I returned to it to him with the simple remark "It is all right so far as it goes". He stared at me and asked me to proceed further, "what do you mean by this observation?" I replied, "The Dewan is in need of your definite views. The reply traverses a good deal of valuable ground but does not contain what is wanted by the Dewan—your decisive and final recommendation". Ananda Rao had a hearty laugh and said "That is what I want to avoid. The Dewan has to form his own conclusions on the materials gathered by him from all heads of departments". In some matters it would be difficult to commit Ananda Rao to definite

conclusions. Having no prejudices and predilections he was generally content to state the premises and leave the decision to higher authorities.

When he was Revenue Commissioner, once a British Royal guest had an invitation to the Khedda operations at Kharapur. The invitations were confined to a very few. The office was in camp in Mysore. One of the subordinates of Ananda Rao, as Director of Statistics, had resolved to go to Kharapur and had made arrangements for the same and had also obtained permission to go to Kharapur from the Dewan's staff. On a Sunday the subordinate went to Ananda Rao's room and requested casual leave for the next two days to enable him to witness the wonderful and exciting elephant driving and catching operations. Ananda Rao was simply sitting like a statute, reading some favourite author and gave no reply. The subordinate repeated the request and getting no answer, acted on the principle of silence indicating consent. Next day after a hurried breakfast at 11 A.M. he again entered the office room and represented to Ananda Rao that he was leaving the place, as kindly permitted by him the previous day. "Where are you going"? was the question. "To Kharapur as submitted by me yesterday", was the reply. Ananda Rao in a firm tone said "Yesterday was a Sunday and a holiday. You know, I never take up office matters on Sundays. So yesterday I could pass no orders. To-day, of course, I cannot permit you to go". The subordinate crest fallen, had to cancel all

his costly arrangements and had to imagine in his office room at Mysore what might be going on at Kharagpur.

UNRUFFLED TEMPER AND UNEQUALLED FORBEARANCE

I know few men in high authority who can like Ananda Rao bear adverse criticism uttered to their own face. To enable me to arrive at this conclusion a remarkable opportunity accidentally offered itself to me while he was Dewan. I was then the Provisional Secretary to the Economic Conference. It was the second or third day after Mr. Srinivasa Sastri (now Right Hon'ble) had been prohibited by the Durbar from delivering a public speech at Bangalore. When I had submitted the papers to the Dewan and was about to leave his room, luxuriantly furnished and with the full paraphernalia of his personal staff and richly robbed jamadars, located at convenient distance within bell-call, the following conversation took place between us. D. represents the Dewan. M. myself.

D. Please stay for a little while and tell me what the public are talking about.

M. I have barely time to go about collecting public opinion. My motto is "Enough unto the day the evil thereof".

D. No, no. You must have heard and formed by this time your own opinion in the matter. It is your own opinion that I am anxious to know.

M. This is office day, office time. I am talking to the Dewan. The duty of Government servants, as I

understand it, is to have no opinions of their own on matters outside their own work, much less on political matters and never to express them.

D. That is all mere theory. I want your opinion.

M. I take it that my opinion whatever it may be, is a privileged one and does not carry with it any penalty, however disagreeable it may be to the Dewan.

D. Certainly, I shall calmly listen to all that you say and shall not carry any prejudice against you or your candid views. You have my assurance to this effect.

M. Then my task is very easy. The public in one voice condemn the action taken by the Durbar in prohibiting Mr. Shastri. He is the most loyal and the most moderate of all living politicians. He is a disciple of Gokhale whom the British Government and the Indian public hold in high esteem. The public of Bangalore feel the insult to Sastri as an insult to themselves nay more than that.

D. That is the public view as you have understood it. Now for your own view.

M. I go a step further than the public. Ever since I heard of this incident, I have been exceedingly sorry that so considerate and so good a Dewan like your esteemed self should have been a party to this prohibition. My regret is still greater when I recall to my mind how your illustrious father as Dewan-Regent of Baroda handled similar situations with conspicuous tact and statesmanship.

D. What is the Baroda anecdote which you refer to? I do not remember having heard any.

M. The incident which I am now going to mention was personally narrated to me in 1896—1897 when I was in Baroda, by Sethu Rao Peshwa, who had been with Rajah Sir T. Madhava Rao and who was then the Manager of the Dewans's Office, Baroda. So its accuracy and authenticity are beyond doubt.

The Raja was being frequently attacked very violently by a section of the vernacular press. Then the supervision of the Baroda Darbar vested in the Bombay Governor. One day the Governor of Bombay and the Rajah happened to travel in the same compartment. His Excellency very kindly invited the attention of the Rajah to the venomous attacks in the vernacular press and asked him why he should not prosecute his malevolent vilifiers. The Dewan-Regent replied with a smile on his lips, "Your Excellency, after all those who revile me, are my own countrymen. I would rather give them the fullest liberty to abuse me than put them in Court. Time will show that on the whole, I have been in the right".

D. Probably you may change your opinion if you know all the facts which however, I am sorry, I cannot disclose to you.

M. I am very grateful to you for the patient and indulgent hearing.

CONCLUSION

Ananda Rao's kindness to and confidence in me struck me as most remarkable. During his time I had to serve four masters, himself and three chairmen of the committees, all high officers of the State, and when acute differences on public matters arose in the natural course of events, the lot of the Secretary became unenviable, once or twice, I had made up my mind to request the Dewan to relieve me of such a responsibility. On those occasions, his courageous and constant support gave me infinite strength and was a recompense for all the temporary unpleasantness which was inevitably involved.

After his retirement, he offered to revise the proof of a book which I was then writing on "Loyalty, Morality and Religion" and, in spite of serious defect of one of his eyes, he was most assiduous in going through the proofs from day to day and suggesting valuable corrections. This testifies to his innate love of scholarly habits at an advanced age and after having held the highest office in the State. On the whole, his entire career was one of steadying influence in any environment in which he was placed and he was a rare specimen of humanity, unoffending, impervious to outside or local influences and scrupulously adhering to routine and discipline at home and abroad.

CHAPTER XXXIV

RAO BAHADUR A. RANGASWAMY IYENGAR.

A gifted student of the Provincial College, Kumbakonam, Rangaswamy Iyengar had acquired proficiency in Mathematics without impairing his knowledge of English. He was good allround and this, coupled with the Law Degree, gave him an air of versatility. He attained consequently distinction in various departments wholly unconnected with one another; such as Comptroller to Government, Deputy Commissioner, Inspector-General of Police, Judge of the Chief Court, Revenue Commissioner and the first President of the then newly organised Mysore Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition; he took personally a leading part in the Ganjam plague riots under the advice of the Plague Commissioner.

There was great intellectual affinity between him and Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar, whose constant companion he was during leisure hours.

In 1906, when T. Ananda Rao was elevated to the Council, Rangaswami Iyengar was disturbed from his seat on the Bench of the Chief Court and was posted as Revenue Commissioner with an addition to his pay and precedence over all the other Heads of Departments. It was then that I came in official contact with him which asted till his retirement from the State service. He was

a strict disciplinarian and at times, it was not easy to get on with him as the following incident would show.

Our first meeting in the office room on the day he took charge was rather exciting and not altogether formal and prosaic as such meetings usually are. His attitude was in contrast to that of his distinguished predecessors in the same office, *viz.*, T. Ananda Rao and V. P. Madhava Rao. Both as a school master and as a journalist. I had striven hard to establish the inherent right of an educated Indian to have a seat for himself before men in authority. The same temperament I carried with me in my official capacity and was tolerated. But, Rangaswami Iyengar had long lived in the narrow official atmosphere and he was keen in keeping up the difference between, what was then known in Mysore as an officer and an official—the former term—including only gazetted officers of and above the rank of Assistant Commissioners, generally, and the latter, all ministerial departmental men whatever their pay and merits may be. On the day he first entered the office he sent for me—I was then the Manager of the office—and he began to put questions without offering me a seat. I drew up a chair from behind and sat down and then began to answer the questions. This irritated him; he looked me straight in the face with a stern eye and with an ironical smile said "I am sure you would soon be gazetted as an Assistant Commissioner, but till then we have to keep up the distinction between officials and officers. Is it not?" I replied: "I am following the precedent of this office. I am behaving

to you just as I was permitted to do by your predecessors. Even the Dewan never makes me stand."

He changed the current of the conversation and with a more benign look which compensated sufficiently for his previous frowns, he continued thus: "It is after all a very small matter. You have been here from the commencement of the office. I want to get a full idea of all the work you have done, all these years, before deciding to retain you here or to suggest your transfer when a suitable vacancy occurs."

I told him that I was doing all the writing and drafting work of the office—of all sorts and varieties—administration reports, reviews, special reports and all drafts to Government. He said:—"Will you please bundle up all the files you refer to—be they 100 in number and send them to my house this evening? Please take care not to put in a single file in which your original draft in pencil or ink is not found. I desire to see your original work and not the work of your clerks".

I sent home to him a large number of files in several trays. Three days after this, he sent for me in the office and I noticed a remarkable change in his temper and method of address and tone. "I am so glad to find that you have done a great deal of very valuable work all these years. I am thoroughly satisfied. I don't wish to leave you. Will you please promise me never to ask for a transfer from this office as long as I am Revenue Commissioner? I am writing to the Dewan that you should be allowed to stay with me all

along and the first Assistant, whoever he may be, may be transferred as often as the Government please. What do you say"? I said "I am wholly in the hands of Government. I promise not to seek a transfer on my own account. It will give me great pleasure to work under you when you entertain after examination such a high opinion of my work in this office?"

From that day we moved as intimate friends. His support and esteem enabled me to get over smoothly many difficulties which otherwise would have been almost insuperable. I vividly remember how once he created for himself an awkward position in his relations with Mr. Maconochie, I.C.S., Private Secretary to His Highness the Maharaja, who was one of the active members of the Exhibition Committee. At the last moment Rangaswami Iyengar sent me to Maconochie for arriving at an amicable understanding. He was rather angry and in a passionable tone said after hearing me: "Please go and tell Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar that it is only because you have come to me on this errand, I drop the matter or else, it would have gone very hard with the President".

It was in 1908, I believe he received from His Highness a valuable decoration and title as a well-merited reward for his long and meritorious services. And His Highness was pleased to close his speech on the occasion of the distribution of prizes in the exhibition grounds in the following memorable words on the evening of the 11th October, 1908.

"In conclusion I congratulate the Exhibition Committee on the results of their labours and in particular the President, Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar and Secretary Mr. Subba Rao to whose indefatigable exertions the success of the exhibition is so largely due".

HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS KANNAMBADI DAM

Rangaswami Iyengar belonged to the class of conservative and cautious administrators who by temperament could not at any time venture beyond the limit of visible and tangible return for the funds invested by the State. He was not enthusiastic about the Krishnaraja Sagara project (Kannambadi scheme) mainly on the ground of its cost and his apprehensions about the sufficiency of the local indigenous propulation to cultivate all the lands which may be made available for wet cultivation. He had also in view the medical and health view of experts that too much wet cultivation in any area is generally accompanied by that area being rendered liable to malaria and of the opinion of the agricultural experts that in the long run dry crops are more advantageous in several respects and also are paying when compared with the excessive cost and risks of wet cultivation which is usually assessed at higher rates by Government. The same bent of mind he carried in his outlook in regard to the establishment of the Mysore University. He thought a great push ought to be given to technical education, education of the masses and female education, before increasing at considerable cost the annual output of arts graduates who cannot all be absorbed in remunerative appointments. In these two

matters he differed somewhat vitally from the then presiding genius of the Mysore administration, Sir M. Visvesvaraya. He was, however, a keen financier and greatly appreciated the establishment of the Mysore Bank and took real interest in its details. He was also interested a great deal in sericulture and had developed a scheme of his own—simple and very economical—for the construction by the State of cheap houses for rearing of silk worms by ryots without their residing therein and with proper safeguards for safety.

At one time he had developed his fighting tendencies to such an extent as to involve himself in an open quarrel with the presiding Dewan, so as not to be on talking terms with him outside the Council Chamber. In one respect, however he set a most praiseworthy example. The manner in which he heard revenue appeals was simply superb. His court room—spacious as it was—looked almost like a sitting of the Chief or High Court. He welcomed and encouraged Advocates and Pleaders. He never allowed clerks and assistants to write notes in appeal cases or to handle the files. He would generally read the entire file himself, hear the parties or their counsel and form his own judgment. It was to me then a matter of sincere delight and gratification to see revenue matters affecting the cultivating population dealt with so sympathetically, so directly and with such enlightenment.

Rangaswami Iyengar had his own official disappointments. He used to tell me often how he missed by almost an inch the Dewanship. I am fully aware of it.

LIFE A MIXTURE OF OPPOSITES

I close this part of my story with a little personal digression. Life is often a mixture of opposite elements. When I look back upon my own humble sphere of active life for the past nearly 50 years from 1882 I wonder how mostly I had to work among opposing currents.

In the Native High School, Coimbatore, we had two parties—each opposing the other. In "The *Hindu*" office of my days there was always sharp difference of opinion between G. Subramania Aiyar and M. Veeraraghavachari. In Mysore when I entered the service, the atmosphere was rent with party strife—and the view points of Sir P. N. Krishnamurthi and V. P. Madhava Rao, of Sir M. Visvesvaraya and several of his colleagues or subordinates—differed. The opinions and the assertiveness of European technical heads of departments had also to be counted as a great potential factor. Therefore, I regard differences of opinion as an insuperable concomitant of public life, and wisdom lies in one not making them personal and in not losing esteem and respect for those who differ from him. We have to wade through diversity and divergence to arrive at a proper understanding. Unity of views may at times be unobtainable, but the driving force of enlightened patriotism either in administration or public improvements when assiduously pursued leaves behind for all times to come only one result—the sweetest and pleasantest memory of good done to our country and our countrymen.

CHAPTER XXXV

SIR M. VISVESVARAYA

Of all the high personages under whom I have served I think Sir M. Visvesvaraya takes rank along with Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar, as an administrator of Mysore. The two belonged to different generations, had distinctly varied political and social outlook, were regarded by the accredited and acknowledged leaders of popular public opinion as the representatives of antagonistic local parties. Both had quite dissimilar previous training as an equipment for holding the highest office under the Mysore Sovereign. But both had a few common traits. Both were distinguished products of the Indian University system. Both had a liberal heart. Both had a burning desire every moment to do something new; something to strike the imagination of the public, both had an immense driving power, both commanded high prestige at the Palace and the Residency, both had the national pride which does not humble itself before other nationals. In this respect Sir M. Visvesvaraya surpassed in one notable instance the illustrious Seshadri. Seshadri somehow put up during his long tenure of Dewanship with the old practice of he and his comrades of the Mysore Service squatting on the floor with crossed legs on the European Durbar Day during the Dasrah festivities while the European guests were comfortably seated on chairs. I believe I am right in saying that Sir M. Visvesvaraya was instrumental in suggesting a

change and was successful in obtaining sanction for it, placing on the same level all Durbaris, European or Indian, so far as seating amenities were concerned, on the European Durbar Day.

MY FIRST ACQUAINTANCE

The very first occasion on which I met Visvesvaraya was in Triplicane in the house of Mr. Veeraragavachariar. Manager of "The *Hindu*" when I was on the staff of "The *Hindu*". He was introduced to me as one of the most promising young Mysore Engineers then in the Bombay service, Subsequently in 1902 when I accompanied Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao in his Bombay tour. I was Visvesvaraya's guest for a week at Poona. It was there that I had the rare privilege of observing him somewhat closely and moving with him at his residence. Then I got a glimpse of his superfine system, his strict discipline, his generous hospitality and his high and noble purpose in all he said and did. There was in him an unquenchable yearning after national progress without his zeal in official work and faith in routine being in the least disturbed. There was in him a superme regard for his countrymen of all castes and creeds and impilicit regard and esteem for eminent non-official leaders of public opinion, in spite of their unpopularity with the British Government or sections of the Indian population—very rare quality to be found in hide bound official life. I then said to myself "Here is one the like of whom I have not yet come across in Madras or Mysore." This view was amply justified by later experience when by the inscrutable

decrees of a beneficent Providence, Visvesvaraya joined the Mysore service. His appointment as Chief Engineer was in itself at the time a small wonder. It was, I believe, due to the initiative of V. P. Madava Rao who had a singular regard for eminent Mysoreans working outside Mysore. His appointment as Dewan was outside the ordinary customary rules of selection but as an extraordinary measure, at a time of extreme dullness and stagnation in administrative activity, it was acclaimed with joy by the entire public. The people generally are quite enthusiastic when something which is extraordinarily out of the way and which is in itself very beneficial is daringly done.

HIS CHIEF ATTRIBUTES AS DEWAN

His main attributes as the Executive head of the administration of a province full of vast potentialities in developed and undeveloped wealth inhabited by about 7 millions of his countrymen may be summed up as follows:—(*a*) an implicit faith—noble in itself—in the possibility of converting, nay transforming, Mysore into a miniature, self-contained and self-maintaining Canada or Australia. (*b*) an irresistible resolution to move the administrative machinery in all branches simultaneously along all the chief requisite lines of progress for achieving the object—educational, commercial, industrial, technical, mercantile—opening up the country by railways and roads—village improvement—Malnad improvement and in all imaginable parallel lines. (*c*) a courageous conception of the cost involved in starting costly schemes and a determination to provide for them

in view to the ample returns which such investments will yield in the long run (*d*) a conviction that every civilised country should be prepared to shoulder national debts if indispensable in the interests of promoting the largest good of the country (*e*) a generous inborn instinct to attract, retain and reward merit which shapes itself suitably to his ideals and aims. (*f*) an indefatigable industry and laborious devotion to work from early morning up to the resting hours of the night from day to day, month to month, year to year for a series of years with unbroken continuity. (*g*) an unquenchable thirst for self-improvement by visiting as often as possible foreign countries, England, America, Switzerland and the Continent of Europe, studying first hand latest improvements (*h*) a systematic effort to keep in touch with current British Indian politics and with sections of the most enlightened non-official Indian opinion and the leaders of such opinion.

Visvesvaraya is by nature exceedingly modest and cannot stand adulation or flattery to his face as most of his predecessors in office could, but what he was most anxious for, was ready acquiescence in his own schemes and willingness to work them up inspite of all odds. His ideas were more dear to his heart than praise of his own self.

TANGIBLE MONUMENTS

In Mysore the Kannambadi Project, the Sandalwood Oil Factory, the Bhadravati Iron Works, the Mysore University, the Mysore Bank, the extension of the Mysore Railway lines will be permanent memorials

of Visvesvaraya's administration. But for him, the Mysore University might not have come into existence or might have been delayed. I remember how restless he was in accomplishing it and how owing to his initiative, one evening at an unusual hour, I had to go with the late Mr. H. V. Nanjundayya to Mr. Banerji's (Sir Albion Rajkumar Banerji) residence and disturb him to get his final approval. Mr. Banerji was for a moment perturbed but when I explained to him the object of the visit and who my companion in the car was, he readily put his signature and then Visvesvaraya felt relieved. If ever the Mysore Bank or the University—accomplished and growing institutions, as they are—desire to cherish the memory of the founder, then Visvesvaraya's statue or bust must stand aloft in both places as a noble reminder to coming generations. But situated as we are, with our philosophical indifference to all personalities, gratitude with most of us being only a lively sense of favours to be received in future—not a recollection of the beneficent deeds done in the past, my ambition may not be realised. Sir M. Visvesvaraya should not be consulted in the matter. The people have a right to honour him in the way they like without caring for his approval.

THE INVISIBLE MONUMENT

The great invisible monument of Visvesvaraya's administration was in my opinion, the great fillip he gave to the recognition of merit among non-officials and his supreme effort at the risk of displeasing a large body of his official colleagues and subordinates, to give

a prominent place in the administration to non-official public opinion and to encourage them by personal courtesy and kindness to take their rightful place in the administrative system and fearlessly voice their true opinion.

For a time the officials thought they had even lost caste with the Dewan and that the non-officials were pampered too much. In all the districts and the village Conferences held then, Visvesvaraya primarily assigned a prominent place to non-officials and at times the officials were in the back benches! Similar procedure had never before been systematically followed by any of his predecessors in office. Sir K. S. Aiyar, Sir P. N. Krishnamurthi and Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao used to meet prominent non-official leaders in their spacious compounds during their morning or evening walks and patronisingly listen to them and redress their grievances. But none of them brought together on the same public platfrom the District and Taluk Officers and the Secretaries to Government and put non-officials along with them—(excluding of course the Dasara and Birthday gatherings) as a matter of administrative routine. The dignity and prestige of non-official public opinion gained a great stimulus during Visvesvaraya's time. All sorts of fantastic rumours were then spread every day. I shall mention only two of them here now which I readily remember. These anecdotes were freely circulated at the time and would show to what depth the ordinary official equilibrium was disturbed by

Mr. Visvesvaraya's unprecedented kindness and respect for non-official opinion.

One officer told me that a village patel had refused to obey the orders of the Amildar because on the previous day the Dewan had visited him in his house!

Another told me that at a certain public meeting convened in Kolar, presided over by the Dewan, in the morning at 10, a non-official had in response to the invitation of the Dewan, preferred a number of complaints against the local officialdom. The Dewan was taken up with this man's public spirit and he asked him to produce proof of his allegations in the afternoon. In the evening when the gathering again assembled, the Dewan called upon the chief speaker of the morning to come forward. The Amildar or the police chief most reverrentially submitted to the Dewan that the non-official speaker was wanted in several criminal cases, that so long he was absconding, that fortunately that morning his presence at the meeting was welcome and when he came out, the police took him to the lock-up!

But Visvesvaraya ignored the uproar and was steady in his policy.

The anecdotes are meant only to illustrate the popular impression and are not meant for ready consumption and unquestioning credence.

A PERSONIFICATION OF DILIGENCE AND DISCIPLINE

What is most admirable in Visvesvaraya's life is his life-long adherence to work, study and self-discipline. In this respect I have not found another to equal him. I have seen him decades ago in Poona. I have

seen him during the period of his Dewanship. I have seen him at Bombay and Bangalore after his retirement from Mysore. All these years, he is the same individual, working from morning till night, with the same discipline in body, mind, dress and system, with the same temperament in regard to the great value of time and abhorrence of all idle talk. I believe even now he is connected in a purely consultative capacity with some Indian States and important industrial concerns. His life is a noble example of hard and arduous work, well worthy of attention as an ideal to be kept in view and followed as far as possible by the younger generation. The Bombay University has covered itself with academic glory by conferring on Visvesvaraya the degree of the Doctor of Laws. The inclusion of his name in the list of eminent degree-holders is a unique honour conferred as much on the University as on himself.

I need hardly add that in all my reminiscences I never consult the personages about whom I write—I only give my own humble views for whatever they may be worth—disinterested long experience and absolute absence of personal bias being the very foundation of my criticisms or commendation.

There is one very rare and conspicuous feature of this distinguished personage's meritorious career to which I wish to invite the special attention of the public. Few of the Ministers of Indian States generally and few of the high Indian officers of the British Government have an experience of service both in British India and Indian States. Fewer among them have in

addition any personal knowledge of big industrial concerns. Of those it is not possible to mention one who has the courage and the ability to publish his views in matters relating to British India and Indian States. Visvesvaraya is a singular exception and his contribution to British Indian politics by his volume on the reconstruction of the Indian system of government, while making no bid for sensation, contains a good deal of sober constructive suggestions worthy of adoption. His presidential address at the Conference of Indian State subjects makes his attitude clear in regard to reforms urgently called for in Indian India. Thus he may be regarded as one, eminently fit to be associated in the consideration and framing of important schemes connected with the future development of both British India and Indian States. Therefore, I at times wondered why this gentleman of unique eminence, whose public life in various parts of India for the past nearly half a century or more was such a striking success, has been omitted from the list of those selected for the Round Table Conference. I can find no satisfactory answer. It then struck me that situated as we are, a great deal of propaganda work or some specific label is necessary for inclusion in such conferences for which there is a good deal of scrambling. One who does not identify himself with any single cause but who takes a calm dispassionate view and has a balanced judgment does not impress the public mind sufficiently strong; or as firmly as the passionate advocate of any particular school of thought; Extremists, Liberals, Communalists,

Commercial magnates—these terms are well understood. Of course, eminent officials in British India and the larger Indian States have the prestige and force of their respective offices to back them up. Visvesvaraya labours under a great defect. He is too modest and too much of a retiring disposition to think loudly of himself in the company of exalted officialdom. Therefore, I concluded that he has been coolly let down in oblivion on this historic occasion, by the British Government and the Indian States. The loss is not his. The loss is the country's as a whole. Because Visvesvaraya has not only intimate knowledge of British India and Indian States, but he has studied at first hand what is obtaining in western countries and America and he will be a most formidable authority in quoting precedents and parallels drawn from all parts of the world in his advocacy of bold measures for the solution of difficult Indian problems.

Leaving the Round Table Conference aside my imagination led me to the grand vision of any of the larger Indian States forming a Legislative Assembly on the lines of the one at Delhi as a preliminary step to the introduction of responsibility in the centre in such States. It seems to me for such an Assembly—if one is found anywhere—Visvesvaraya, if he could be prevailed upon to accept the presidentship for a few years—would be as successful as Sir Fredrick Whyte. It is time that in the Indian States, the Dewans give up the presidentship of Councils and Assemblies and whenever non-official retired gentlemen of experience

are found their services are utilised for a period and ultimately the Assembly be invested with the power of electing their own chairman among the elected members.

CHAPTER XXXVI

SIR K. P. PUTTANNA CHETTIAR

For a short period I was associated in work under this veteran officer and famous citizen of the State, when he was chairman of the Agricultural Committee and Councillor. Rising from humble beginnings in the railway service, before the Rendition, by virtue of his unsurpassed industry, life-long good humour of a superfine kind and a lovable disposition, which injures none but tries to sympathise with all, by assiduously keeping himself fully posted upto-date in State affairs, in general politics and in current literature, this gentleman gradually worked his way up to an eminence not reached by any of his fellow subjects of the Mysore State.

In one respect he is a very proud exemplifier of the chances for high distinction in life which the beneficent Mysore Raj offered then, for non-university men. British India offers chances through the modern direct access to Legislative Councils and Ministerships through the open door of election. Mr. Chettiar rose officially to a position next only to that of the Dewan—unofficially he earned after his retirement by his public spirit and magnificent charities, a knighthood. Mr. Chettiar's distinctions both official and non-official, were all exceedingly well-earned and have not been acquired by services

which do not directly relate to the well-being of the general public. They were not earned by services solely pertaining to the Government in a spirit of exclusiveness prejudicial or antagonistic to the interests of the public. Herein lies their greatest merit. Whenever Chettiar rose higher and higher, step by step, both officials and non-officials felt within their innermost hearts that the honours were exceedingly well deserved. The secret of Mr. Chettiar's marvellous onward march in his long career lies in a combination of qualities of head and heart generally not found in most of us. It was this combination of qualities and disciplined life that enabled him to rise above his compeers of higher university qualifications in every rung of the official ladder. To industry which keeps him at his desk from morning to evening, to an equable temper which welcomes with a somewhat bland and at times unmeaning smile everyone who wishes to approach him on business or for assistance, he adds a very actively operating intensive desire to pacify hostile parties, to aid indigenous industries and efforts. He passionately identifies himself with important industrial, commercial and co-operative concerns, and he fully devotes his spare time and money to aid progressive indigenous movements. Mysore and Bangalore have benefited immensely by Mr. Chettiar's efforts. During the past nearly thirty-five years, I have been personally acquainted with his multifarious activities. During the awful times of the first outbreak of the plague, he was most useful to the State in the settlement of knotty and exciting local

problems and amidst hostile and differing communities. He took a leading part in the establishment of the New Tharagupet in Bangalore City. He always gave sound and sober advice to distinguished philanthropists like Sowcar Dodanna Chetti and Thotadappa. As a recognised leader of the virile and powerful indigenous Lingayat community his vast and abiding influence for good has been a remarkable asset to the State and the City of Bangalore.

The Mysore Bank, the Mysore Krishna Rajendra Cotton Mills, the Central Co-operative Provincial Bank and the Bangalore Printing and Publishing Company, owe their origin and rise to Mr. Chettiar's personal assistance and guidance. His general attitude towards all movements and persons has always been, whenever possible, one of active co-operation and never of obstruction. I have not been able to find another officer or non-official in the Mysore State to compare with Mr. Chettiar in one singular respect. From Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar up to Sir Mirza Ismail, he is the one exceptional personality who has been held in esteem and regard by all successive Dewans, who hated each other and the policy of their predecessors! No party leader, no party officer, no communalist and no official or non-official has ever had a tangible complaint against Mr. Chettiar. As a Sub-Division Officer, as a Deputy Commissioner, as the President of the City Municipality, as President of the City Improvement Board and as a Councillor, Mr. Chettiar had at times to do very delicate and difficult and even unpopular work. He had to keep

himself wide awake for days and months in acute anxiety in the midst of warring camps, without uttering a single word of disparagement to either side. He is a perfect master in the art of saying "No" indirectly without creating any ill-will. He is a great adept in the art of gently trampling on another's foot, if absolutely necessary, leaving the other party unperturbed and altogether pleased by the performance! I have known him listening to representatives, of opposite causes, to impossible requests, partly in smile and partly in disguised disgust for hours together and emerging out of the ordeal with the consciousness of a triumph, which follows the feeling of satisfying both the parties! By nature and instinct he is a cosmopolitan and not a communalist in his general outlook. By disposition he is generous. He has immortalised himself in Bangalore and Mysore by the various institutions he has warmly befriended and his name and fame will endure long after him.

CHAPTER XXXVII

C. MADIAH

One of the most outstanding figures notable for its martial appearance and high courage when I entered the Mysore Service in 1896 was that of Madiah. He was a native of Coorg and an officer whose personality and insistence had to be acknowledged by all who came in contact with him. He was for several years Deputy Commissioner, Mysore, had organised an exhibition later on, acted as Inspector-General of Police and rose to the position of a Councillor. I met him often and his manly attitude evoked my admiration. His administrative grit and independence were of a rare order—hardly met with in British India or Indian States.

When he was Deputy Commissioner, Mysore—during the first awful outbreak of the plague—there was a serious riot in Ganjam—a village near Seringapatam. The tract is noted for its fertility and the turbulent character of some of its leading citizens. The riot was quelled in a remarkably able manner by the combined mental alertness and executive capacity of V. P. Madhava Rao who as Plague Commissioner directed the operations of, A. Rangaswami Iyengar, Inspector-General of Police, who was on the spot and who fired at the rioters, and the hold Madiah had on the people as District Magistrate. The principal rioters were in the usual

course prosecuted and convicted to various terms of imprisonment. However one of the ringleaders subsequently applied for pardon, and at the instance of Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar, pardon was granted. The liberated individual straight went to the camp of the District Magistrate and presented himself before him to give a practical demonstration of his success. Madiah was in all rage at this unexpected discomfiture and upsetting of the conviction so laboriously obtained. The conviction had not been quashed by the highest judicial Courts of the State. The District Magistrate being responsible for peace and order of the District, should, in the opinion of Madiah, have been consulted confidentially before the individual was set at liberty. In this view he protested and submitted his resignation! The Executive head of the administration then found himself in a very awkward position. Madiah's firm and unflinching decision was not without justification. Consequently to get over the impasse, arts of diplomacy were resorted to. One of the high officers of the State was requested by the Dewan to interview Madiah personally and to persuade him to withdraw the resignation. The effort was successful but Madiah's courage left an indelible impression on the public mind and this paved the way for his further advancement in the service. My acquaintance with several of the natives of Coorg and my stay at Mercara for a few days has led me to the conviction that the future of Coorg will be very bright if it is amalgamated with the Mysore State. Because Coorg is almost on the borders of Mysore; in point of climate, language and

agricultural and industrial crops there is greater affinity between Mysore and Coorg than between Coorg and the Southern Maharastra Districts of Dharwar and Belgaum or between Coorg and the Ceded Districts of Bellary and Anantapur. Coorg is too small a tract to have an independent administration. I venture to make the suggestion which is not at all a new one, more in the interests of Coorg than in those of Mysore. For Mysore is already a sufficiently big Provincial administration and it can stand favourable comparison, as Lord Dufferin once publicly announced, with some of the smaller kingdoms of Europe. Mysore is one of the most progressive States, more progressive than some of the British Indian provinces in some respects. Recently I had a striking illustration of this aspect. While travelling from Bangalore to Bombay in June last, I had for my companion in the train an Englishman, the representative of a big firm in England who had travelled over great parts of the world. In the course of his conversation he told me that he preferred in most respects England to India but his only regret in leaving India would be that he loses the opportunity of frequently visiting Mysore and Bangalore which he liked best of all the places he had seen.

DALAVOY DEVRAJ URS

This Ursu nobleman rose to distinction in the Mysore Public Service from the ranks of the Police Department and reached the position of a trusted member of H. H. the Maharaja's Council, after making a mark as Deputy Commissioner for several years of the

Hassan District. The Mysore Royal family belongs to a distinct and numerically limited community and the circle of those fit by tradition and family dignity to form marriage alliances with members of the Royal family is a restricted one.

The Dalvoys—hereditary Ministers of old—are the most important of the families which are eligible for this valued privilege.

His appearance was always very dignified and he carried as it were in his very look and in his face traits of nobility. I first met him when he was a Superintendent of Police before my entry into the service. I have been assured by Durbar Bakshi Narasimha Iyengar that H. H. the late Maharaja Chamarajendra Wodiyar Bahadur was so solicitous about the integrity and efficiency of the service that for a time it was not possible to pursuade His Highness to exempt Dalvoy from passing some departmental examinations without which his promotion could not be sanctioned—at an age when such exemptions in the case of officers were in the category of established official routine. Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar had to exert a great deal personally to secure the exemption and thus make Dalvoy's path smooth for rising higher as vacancies occurred and as his work and seniority made him eligible for preferment.

During the last stage of his life he was Councillor and Chairman of the Agricultural Committee of the Economic Conference. Then I was his Secretary. I found it a source of great delight to work under him. In every word and expression he used, there was some-

thing noble and his confidence was unbounded. It is very rare to come across such splendid specimens of humanity who confide fully in others, especially in one who was regarded with no small degree of suspicion as irrevocably wedded to journalistic feats *in cog.* He was very methodical in his work and his sound common sense, coupled with his vast experience, enabled him to appreciate the working of the Committee and to guide the deliberations with ability and decisiveness.

On a certain afternoon I was suddenly called by Dalvoy rather urgently. It surprised me, for usually he was very calm and would as a rule wait for matters being put up before him in the ordinary course. And then the Conference work was only an addition to the regular work of the Council. When I appeared before him, he asked me: "Are you anxious to go away from me?" I replied that I was not in the least anxious and that I did not move in that direction. He was satisfied and said: "I was informally consulted this morning regarding your transfer to another Committee. I replied that if the Government took you away from me I would like to resign my Chairmanship." What had happened was the Chairman of another Committee asked me whether I would be willing to work under him; to which I assented if the Government so desired. Immediately, he approached the Dewan, who consulted Dalvoy and got the above answer.

Shortly after, one evening, he proposed to inspect the Tata Silk Farm next morning and asked me to wait for him at the Basavangudi Police Station. When on

the fateful day I was anxiously awaiting his arrival, a police officer rushed into the police station in great haste and to my utter bewilderment and consternation announced that Dalvoy had just then a sudden stroke of a deadly fit and was no more! How thin is the thread that holds life in this mortal perishable body! Instead of my accompanying him to the silk farm I had to hasten to his residence to attend the funeral! Truly the ways of Providence are inscrutable!

K. DORASAMI AIYAR

This gentleman, the eldest son of Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar, was appointed to the gazetted ranks of the service under the peculiar privileges then enjoyed by the Dewans. He, after some training under his father, was sent out to the districts. While he was Sub-division officer at Chickballapur—at one time famous for the turbulent assertions of its citizens—there was a serious disturbance during the first plague epidemic. A very highly qualified medical officer deputed to Chickballapur from Bangalore for inoculating the people was very roughly handled by the infuriated, superstitious populace. The riot was quelled and Dorasami Aiyar subsequently became a Deputy Commissioner. As Deputy Commissioner he made a name for strict discipline, speedy despatch of work and for having a firm grip as a District Magistrate. He was sympathetic in regard to the grievances of the ryots, later on, he became Revenue Commissioner and Chairman of the Agricultural Committee. It was then that I came into immediate contact with him. By that time his constitutional dis-

abilities had increased, but his sense of duty was very keen. His method was to choose men on whom he could rely fully and give them the widest latitude. At our first meeting he told me that he gave me a free hand and that I might dispose of papers and drafts as I thought fit, keeping him informed of the progress of events. He added that for any good work I did, the credit was entirely mine. If things however went wrong the responsibility was also mine.

His brain used to work quickly. He scarcely stayed in his office or the committee rooms for more than a few hours every day. He had made up his mind to throw up the reins of office at any moment if he were interfered with, in regard to subjects wholly under his control or supervision. In order to avoid any inquiry or interference from above, he once asked me to be almost always on tour in the districts.

He was in every way fit to be a Councillor but his ambition did not lie that way. It is a pity that the insidious disease from which he was long suffering ended his life prematurely. However as an officer of Government he has left marked impressions as one who was in no way afraid of the Government. His loyalty to the Sovereign and interest in the welfare of the people committed to his care, were always supreme.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

SARDAR SIR M. KANTARAJ URS

A graduate of the Madras Uuniversity from the Christian College, a favourite student of Dr. Miller, this Ursu nobleman was related to the Mysore Royal family intimately. He was the brother of Her Highness the Dowager Maharani, C. I. and son-in-law, having married the eldest Princess.

He was nominated to the Civil Service along with one or two other graduates in the service then. My acquaintance with him began when he was Sub-Divisional Officer of Nanjangud. He submitted cheerfully to the discipline of the Service. Once he approached the Dewan direct for a short leave but was politely informed to apply to the head of the Revenue Department in the matter. Such strictness is essential as otherwise the wholesome traditions of the service may deteriorate. He was Deputy Commissioner of the Mysore District, for a long number of years. The Mysore district is a very large one in area and it contains probably the largest number of taluks in a district. Besides it has special importance attached to it as being located at the headquarters of the Palace and the Royal family, while Bangalore is recognised as the official capital of the Dewan and the Councillors. Owing to the requirements of the Palace, the Dasara and Birthday occasions,

the rush of important visitors and the location within the district of the *khedda* operations, the number of calls on the time, personal attendance and attention of the Deputy Commissioner are multifarious—so multifarious that he has at times no time to visit all the taluk Headquarters or important villages. During the Dewanship of Sir M. Visvesvaraya this fact was ostentatiously demonstrated by a very forward and witty member of the Representative Assembly who represented that only when the members came to Mysore they became cognisant of the existence of the large paraphernalia of official heads like the Deputy Commissioner, the Executive Engineer, etc., as none of them had visited his taluk during the year.

I was a great deal gratified at Mr. Kantaraj Urs being able to meet the demands on his time and at his regular attendance in the office. He patiently gave interviews to a number of people who daily waited on him. In spite of his busy official life he had an abiding interest in the resuscitation of the Kannada literature and gave liberal encouragement to young writers.

This world is so complex in some matters, that at times Sir Kantaraj Urs used to feel that in spite of his hard and conscientious work, in the public mind there was a feeling that his preferment in official life was due more to the accident of his relationship than to his own merits! Once, he took me into his confidence and gave expression to the above feeling and that at times his undoubted claims were overlooked by Government on that account.

In the years 1907 and 1908 I had to stay at Mysore for several months to lay for the first time the lines of the exhibition in regard to so many details and then I had no other alternative but to take the active aid of the Deputy Commissioner without waiting for orders from my superiors at Bangalore. One day Sir Kantaraj Urs was surprised at the interviews I so often sought with him and asked me " How is it you seek my advice in all these matters without applying to the Revenue Commissioner who is the President of the Committee?" I replied to him that the President had given me a free hand in all arrangements and therefore I regarded the Deputy Commissioner, the officer on the spot, as the head to whom I may look for guidance. I added that so long as the work went on well and satisfactorily the question of ultimate authority was not of much consequence. He appreciated my reasoning greatly and from that day his co-operation was assured and was very valuable and since then our relations were very cordial.

By the time he became Dewan I was superannuated and had two extensions. But about a year's further extension was necessary to enable me to entitle me for full pension, but the Government had passed orders regarding my retirement. I was then in a great fix. I stood the chance of loosing a good slice of pension. In that dilemma, I approached Sir Kantaraj Urs and put up a spirited but humble protest. He gave me a patient hearing and asked me how he could have acted otherwise than he had done as I had already two extentions and the Departmental report was adverse to my continuance.

I narrated in some detail the reasons which ought to prevail for not respecting the departmental report. The Dewan was astonished at some of my revelations, wanted confirmation of the details and being satisfied, recommended my further extension and cancellation of the order already passed, which was accepted and sanctioned by the Government. I could not forget his patience and kindness at such a critical juncture of my official life. I can never forget at this time the valuable co-operation and help rendered to me by the late Mr. R. H. Campbell and Sir Mirza Ismail who was then Huzur Secretary.

But subsequently at the nick of the moment another formidable obstacle came into view. As a result of my going to Baroda at the commencement of my service for about 10 months on leave without pay, there was a break in the service and unless it was condoned, the title for full pension would be defective. The condonation of such breaks is a peculiar prerogative of the Sovereign. And in this attempt both Mr. M. N. Krishna Rao, then Financial Secretary and the Dewan were exceedingly helpful to me. I believe I was almost the first officer to get the benefit of the then newly introduced Service Regulations regarding condonation.

Sirdar Kantaraj Urs' regime as Dewan was not spectacular as he succeeded so conspicuous and so progressive an administrator as Sir M. Visvesvaraya whose splendid and costly schemes had dazzled the whole of India. Besides the aftermath of the war had adverse effects on the economic success of large undertakings.

The best that the Sirdar could do was to maintain unimpaired the schemes already in operation. The spirit of the times had greatly changed and the communal virus had infected the public mind but Sir Kantaraj Urs tried his best to keep himself above all party squabbles.

Owing to failing health, he had to retire before his time and he went on a world tour. But for reasons of health he could not complete it and the cruel hand of death deprived Mysore of one of the foremost non-official leaders of the Ursu community.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE LATE SIR VITHALDAS DAMODAR THACKERSEY.

Some months after my retirement from service in April 1921 I received a wire from this millionaire of Bombay to meet him at Poona. My name had been mentioned to him by some of my Bombay friends, as one having both journalistic and official experience. His name was well known at that time for his princely donation of sixteen lakhs to the Women's University of Poona and a large amount to the Poona Seva Sadan buildings. Those donations were exclusive of a large number of institutions and persons who were helped by him in many ways. He was one of the distinguished public men in the first ranks of the social, political, industrial and economic life of Bombay, and under his supervision were several institutions and banking concerns in other places such as Poona and Delhi. He was directly interested in the Dwaraka Junagad Railway. His was a very busy and active life and his activity from morning till night was marvellous. It was when I was with him that I could realise fully what great responsibilities opulent business-men had to shoulder and how exceedingly vigilant and circumspect they had to be. I am aware at one period of his life, he was put to great anxiety and he emerged from the severe ordeal with

remarkable patience and courage. His presence in the Legislative Assembly was a source of immense strength both by to the Government and the Nationalist party. He had kept himself fully posted in the intricate subjects of Exchange, store purchase, needs of banking concerns, mills and railways. His advice was sought after both by non-officials and officials. He maintained his balance so well with all parties that he attained a status of high eminence in the councils of his countrymen and the Government. There was hardly any public concern in Bombay in which he had not taken interest and which did not look up to him at times for guidance.

I had a striking illustration of his great beneficent influence in Bombay in a matter in which I was personally concerned. The case is a very interesting one from a general point of view.

An insurance Company had refused to pay the bonus for a policy, the holder of which died in the influenza of 1918 on the 24th October at 11-30 in the night. The days of grace expired on the same day and the premium was due on the 9th. The Company according to its rules, had agreed to give the claim on the policy if death had occurred within the days of grace. The point at issue was whether, under the circumstances, the death had occurred within the days of grace, or whether it was outside the limit. The Company contended that if death had occurred before 5 in the evening on the 24th, within the office hours, the claim would be within the provisions of the rules. The other party contended that a day should be counted from 12 in the

night to next day 12—like the Railway time. There was hardly a judicial decision defining when a day commenced and ended. By 1921 October three years of limitation for filing a suit had expired. When this matter was casually mentioned to Sir Vithaldas, he grasped the humane view involved in the case and sent word to the Company that the claim was worthy of equitable consideration. The Company which had for nearly three years taken up a refractory attitude, and when the claim had been barred by the law of limitation, at once agreed to act on the advice of Sir Vithaldas and sanctioned the claim.

The broader interests of the country on every important subject did not escape his attention. He had a very large outlook on public affairs. Once at Simla he asked me to go through some notes which had been prepared by experts and by himself on some intricate aspects of exchange. The paper dealt with the subject in some detail. After perusing it a number of times, I found that I could make no effective contribution to help my chief. When I met him I candidly confessed that my knowledge of the subject was so imperfect as not to be of any use to him. He simply smiled and said "Please bring here the paper and show me the suggestions you have made, if any, in the margin. I simply desire to have the view of the man in the street, one who has not made a special study of the subject. My anxiety is, if you do not make out anything of it and if I cannot convince you, I can hardly expect to convince the average Mem-

ber of the Assembly, for you do not lag behind the average Member in point of culture and study."

Sir Vithaldas' style of living and the elegance of his tastes were princely. He had eminent men with him in the nights when there were discussions on the burning topics of the day. Lady Vithaldas' devotion to him was exemplary and the exceedingly noble and elegant life of their household deserved emulation by the aristocracy of India. Such affectionate nature of both the husband and wife is very rarely met with. I always cherish with gratitude their kindness to me during my short stay with them and they treated me with truly fraternal esteem and affection.

His premature and untimely death in 1922 deprived India of the services of an enlightened patriot, Bombay one of its leading statesmen, a magnate in the commercial and industrial world and a great philanthropist. His name and fame will survive long in the annals of Bombay and other places as evidence of his nobility and large-heartedness.

CHAPTER XL

MY BRITISH ACQUAINTANCES

I

Early in life I was sufficiently impressed with the majesty of law and the benefits of peace and order introduced by British rule. *"The Amrita Bazar Patrika"*, the nationalist organ of those days, was showing the other side of the picture as against the *Pioneer*, the weakest points of British administration, and was thundering forth week after week over the more fantastic antiques of Political Agents and exhibitions, in a variety of forms, of racial antagonism and superiority. It was then plain to me that if in the evolution of every-day life we had to reckon with any single supreme and predominant factor, next to that of Almighty God, and the unseen decrees of fate, it was the all powerful British Government and the agents of the Government exercising their full authority in the manner they thought most conducive to their own and the country's interests. The Indian, by long inherited instinct, generally submits himself easily to be ruled; he also shows deference to the members of the ruling race. It has always occurred to me that if Great Britain can take credit for the establishment and consolidation of British sovereignty in India, the Indians can take credit for their hearty co-operation and their docile, active and

passive appreciation of the men and measures introduced by Government. I do not think there is in God's created world any other part of the globe in which the art of Government is easier in the long run than in the historic, ancient continent of India, provided we set about the work in right earnest and are prepared to hold the scales evenly amidst all contending forces, including our own precious selves, and our kith and kin.

So loud and so sincere at times in the past was the spirit of thankfulness that some of the wisest and most independent patriotic citizens like Mr. Ranade who could not be persuaded to form any hasty or selfish conclusions, were at one time not afraid to publicly maintain that the connection between England and India, established by a strange and hitherto unknown process, was almost providential. This view found its counterpart in the reflections of some of the great non-official leaders of public opinion who formed the strongest opposition to Government. Mr. G. Subramania Iyer who in the hey-day and the zenith of his independent thinking, was never cowed down by any personal considerations, had in his heart of hearts a warm corner for the more virile qualities of the Britishers. He used often to tell me that the Britishers were generally strong in qualities in which we were deficient and that we Indians were strong in humane instincts and characteristitics which the Britishers lacked. He would carry on an elaborate analysis of the above statement in all its details and after a detailed explanation, conclude the argument by saying that British sway was by no means

a mere accident, but had a prospect before it, unseen at present, either by Englishmen or Indians. Thus there was an element of common sympathy between the views of the Bombay Judge and the Madras journalist. I even now distinctly recollect the great esteem in which British officers were held in the Tanjore District when I was a boy and the kindliness with which the entire population viewed the advent of the British in their midst. If to-day different sentiments prevail, in the same Tanjore District and in orther parts of the Presidency, I believe that the fault does not lie wholly with our own people. With these prefatory remarks I shall go to my subject.

THE REVS. KAY AND BLAKE

The first Englishman I came in contact was Mr. J. Marsh, the renowned Principal of the Tanjore S.P.G. High School who taught me the English alphabet in the Vallam Mission School. Next I became acquainted with Revs. Kay and Blake. These two missionary gentlemen first came to Kumbakonam and lived there for a short time. It was in the seventies of the last century. Englishmen generally lived outside the town and far away from the people. This isolation has been deplored by many, and to it has been, at times, attributed the racial misunderstandings which are such a deplorable feature of Indian public and political life. Some of the learned Pandits of that celebrated seat of Western, Eastern, and Mathematical culture, Kumbakonam, often used to tell me that the greatest blunder

committed by Great Britain was to allow her sons at the commencement to live far away from the people and not to have had a recognised status in the Indian community. One of my learned Sanskrit Pandits would cause immense laughter by often stating that if English ladies and gentlemen had only at the first advent to India, lived among the people, learnt well colloquially Sanskrit and some one of the vernacular languages, engaged high caste cooks and mixed with people on terms of social equality, without caring for the incidental inconveniences which such a drastic change in their daily routine of life would inevitably involve, then the political history of India would have been far different from what it is. The days of Messrs. Kay & Blake were days in which Missionary efforts were rewarded with rich results and conversion to Christianity was one of the recognized alarming factors of Hindu social life. It was the Theosophical movement which operated as the most powerful set-back to the Evangelistic progress of Missionaries. This aspect of the Theosophical movement has always impressed on me from the time I met Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott at Coimbatore on their first arrival. I have never been blind to the good results achieved by the pioneers in Theosophy, though I belong to that class of thinkers who genuinely believe that we have already too many religions, sects, and societies in India, and what is required is quite different from a multiplication of the existing evils.

One evening myself and a few other boys were walking outside the town and saw Englishmen playing Badminton in the compound. At Kumbakonam, in those days, we hardly met any Britishers. We were standing outside the gate, afraid of entering it. One of the gentlemen inside kindly beckoned to us to come in and when we went there, ordered the peon to bring us a bench and asked us to sit thereon and watch the play. We never anticipated such a hearty welcome. We were all boys reading in the lower classes and none of us could talk English freely and much less understand fully the words addressed to us. Kindness goes a great way in this world, especially when it is offered spontaneously, and when the recipient is by no means entitled to it by the conventions of social life, it evokes confidence and gratitude. It was so in this case. After the play was over, the English friend who had so far welcomed us took us inside, asked each of us the class in which we were reading, the communties to which we belonged and the profession of our fathers and guardians. Always given from early boyhood to talking a great deal, I, easily became the spokesman of the party and in return enquired of my English acquaintance his name and profession. Then to my delight I learnt it was no other than the Rev. Mr. W. H. Blake. He said it would give him immense pleasure to see all of us whenever we can conveniently go to him and to teach us to talk English fluently. He gave us each a picture book. We returned home as if we had made a great conquest. From that time every week I freely resorted

to Rev. Blake's residence and he would spend with me an hour or two. He never talked to me about Christianity or conversions. He thereby rose in my boyish estimation immeasurably. I said to myself, "Here is a true Christian who does not want to convert any one". I asked him for a copy of the Bible which he readily gave me. It was one of the great religious books which I read through with great and abiding interest. Rev. Blake often played with me Badminton and we became intimate, in spite of the great disparity of age between us and in spite of his eminence as a scholar and head of his Mission. Later on he removed his head quarters to Tanjore. I used to visit him occasionally during the vacation on my way to Pattukottah and Tiruturaipundi where my father was employed. Till at last after the expiry of several years, when I was in the "*Hindu*" Office, once I had to go to Vallam to see by previous engagement Mr. J. Thompson (subsequently the Hon'ble Sir) who was then Collector of the Tanjore District. Mr. T. was somewhat stern in his manners and it was only after I became fully acquainted with him that I was able to find out his merits. After my interview with him for about two hours, on my way back to Tanjore, I strayed into the Mission Bungalow where Rev. B. was surrounded by a large crowd of students. I made my appearance suddenly, never sent in my card. My object was a surprise visit to see whether he could recognise me when we had not met for about seven or eight years. He at once sprang up from his chair, took me to his private room and then

like a sooth-sayer, in his flowing robes and with great merriment, began to tell me when I had come, when I saw Mr. T., what object I had in seeing him. He concluded by saying that he was waiting to see whether I would depart from Tanjore without calling on him. I was most agreeably surprised and asked him how he knew my movements. He said Mr. T. was a good friend of his, in his last conversation with him, they were talking about me and he had thus come to know all about my movements. Rev. B. was an admirable Missionary in several respects, and men like him, devoted truly, to the service of mankind are a source of inspiration to humanity and elevate the religion to which they owe allegiance. They are more intent on human progress and enlightenment and human welfare than on the filling up of their denominational registers with the names of either illiterate dupes or cunning seekers after worldly pleasures through the portals of pretended religious convictions. Rev. Kay was an austere and stern disciplinarian and kept boys at a great distance. His very appearance scared us away while that of his younger comrade Rev. B. was in itself an eloquent invitation to us to make us feel that we were somewhere in our homes and we could, without fear of chastisement, take the liberty of putting whatever questions we liked and disturbing from the book-shelves whatever volume was most attractive. Thus my earliest impressions were wholly in favour of missionary self-sacrifice, and the high standard of sense of duty which such a life implied.

Dr. MILLER

The most illustrious representative of the body of self-sacrificing missionaries with whom I was for a time in somewhat familiar contact, was the Rev. Dr. Miller. His name as an educationist was in those days always coupled for distinction with those of Thompson, Porter and Duncan of the Presidency and Kumbakonam Colleges. I had several interviews with Dr. Miller while I was at Madras. One anecdote about him I have great pleasure in now publishing. Once in the Christian College Debating Society, a B.A. class student of pronounced agnostic tendencies arranged for a debate on that most difficult and stupendous of all imaginable subjects. "The Existence of God". My friend Mr. A. Subba Rao, B.A., Assistant Professor of History of the Presidency College, a warm and sincere admirer of the writings of Ingersoll and Bradlaugh, the eminent freethinkers, was requested to preside on the occasion. A few of us, his friends-strong thiests and firm believers in the mercy of Providence, attended the meeting. In the midst of the exciting debate the venerable personality of the revered *Guru* Dr. Miller, gently and almost unobserved, glided through one of the side doors and took a seat behind the Chairman's. He beckoned to some of us near, not to create confusion by recognising him or by any attempt to show him the respect due to his position. Before the debate concluded at about 8-15 P.M. he silently left the hall, and went out as gently and as unobserved as when he entered it. Subsequently I heard that some of the more bigoted among the missionaries

both at Madras and Scotland, were rather horrified at so strict a disciplinarian like Dr. Miller permitting a debate of such a sacrilegious nature in the precincts of the College Hall and under his august presence. When the hostile views of these dissenters were placed before Dr. Miller, he seems to have sent a most dignified and the sanest reply that it was for the best for the future of the College that such important subjects should be thoroughly debated upon by the students within the College premises and under the guidance of responsible professors than outside the College and among the students themselves, without the safeguards available in the College. I am one of those who believe that if Dr. Miller had entered Parliament he would have risen to the position of a Cabinet Minister or the Viceroy of India. It is but rarely that such gifted Britishers take voluntarily to the educational field in India.

However much we may object to the proselytising tendencies of missionaries we cannot but admire the thoroughness of their organisation and the earnestness and devotion with which, from generation to generation, in almost unbroken continuity, the missionary bodies, whether educational or medical or propagandistic, are carrying on their own cherished schemes never being baffled by the results not being commensurate with the time or money spent on them. It has often struck me that in our present political condition and political agitation, such faith and such unflagging spirit are required to work out our own destiny. The Indian National Cogress or a wing of it has been ever so long talking of

propaganda on behalf of India in foreign countries. It is beyond doubt that India would gain immeasurably in the estimation of the modern world if its merits and wants were made known by able and sincere Indians living abroad. But our efforts in this direction are at best only spasmodic. When even a handful of patriotic Indians having the power to enlighten the masses in Europe, Great Britain and America, plant themselves therein and make it their life work and send back to us information regarding trade, arts and facilities and openings for us and our raw and manufactured products, a new era would dawn on Indian politics. Of course we have to carry on this important work under well defined limitations lest we should deprive ourselves of the right of being heard and respected by all sections of humanity. When such a stage of worldwide influence is reached by us, our civilization, our merits and our aspirations would command a far higher level of appreciation in world politics than they do to-day. I am thinking at times why some of my gifted countrymen blessed with money and brains could not start a paper called *"India"* in Geneva the seat of the League of Nations. Geneva is the Mecca and Benares of the modern politicians. Our cause is no more hopeless than the conversion of the entire Hindustan to Christianity.

H. O. D. HARDING, I.C.S.

Of the British Indian Civilians, the earliest of my acquaintances was Mr. H. As an Assistant or Sub-Collector he began to contribute to the columns of 'The *Hindu*' and 'The *Reformer*' and he began to write to

me freely. In those days the distance between young Indians and the Civilian Officers was very great. Each regarded the other with feelings of distrust. As a rule we never accepted their notions of our inferiority to them in any respect. And we were always prepared to avoid passing by the way in which they stood in authority. The political feeling was also of an aggravated racial insistence on the one side and racial assertion and ridicule or slavish submission on the other. In such an atmosphere, Mr. H. entered into intellectual comradeship with myself and my journalistic friends on terms of perfect equality. This spirit of his evoked our admiration and our hearty response. We were never dismayed by the inherent difference of views between us. All that we wished for is argument as equals. This H. was willing to concede to us fully. Once this spirit of his seemed to me so strange that I enquired eagerly of others to what part of Great Britain he belonged, and on being informed that he was of Irish extraction, I attributed his sense of equality to the sufferings of Ireland and the equalising and humanising influences which the Irish struggle for ages and centuries had imbued him with, I saw him long after he began writing letters to me. He was a genuine friend of the Indian ryots and took a sincere interest in understanding them and helping them. As Collector of a District he incurred the dire wrath of the Madras Government by his insistence on a truly liberal policy in famine administration, and was shunted to the Judicial Department. After I left "The *Hindu*" office, I lost

touch with him, though at distant intervals he responded to my letters, till at last by mere chance he had come to Bangalore and after an age we met at the West End Hotel. He was the same Harding in his spirit of true friendship towards me. A few days after his departure, I was shocked to read in the papers of his death suddenly at the hands of an assassin while he was presiding over the District and Sessions Court, Trichinopoly. After the lapse of such a long time, when I glance through his handwriting which is so difficult to make out, I feel very high regard for him. The following letters of his to me—I publish only a few of them now —are full of refreshingly original and delightfully hostile views. To me it is always a pleasure to see ourselves as others see us. The strongest invectives never estrange me from any one. For I myself exercise always in full, within the limits of the law, the right of free criticism of the highest in the land. One of my tests of greatness is the courage of one to bear patiently, so far as public interests are concerned, the worst that can be said of him and that in the most pungent and relentlessly offensive manner. For in this land of eternal philosophy and eternal confusion of thought, ideals and arguments, soft words and polite protests never evoke the smallest attention. When I read English and American Journals and the debates of their Parliaments, it often strikes me that we as a nation have to undergo, yet years of hard training, before we can claim perfect equality with them in the great art of vivid misrepresentation, vituperation and exaggeration.

No. I

Tindi,
11-12.

"My dear Sir,—I am after all submitting an article to the *Hindu*, which I hope may be published. It will no doubt make many very angry, but it does no harm enraging men like Krishna Dasa Babu. And I think, an antidote is really needed just now to the absurd praise that a few foolish English people are pouring on Hindus. I approve of the Congress as an instrument for constructing the nation of men,—and I approve of Mr. Hume to a large extent. He had done some absurd things, but the extension of the Legislative Councils and the power of interpellation are good,—so far as they are his work. Nevertheless I think all I say is true,—and as I am not one of those who value the popularity that comes from praising the public, I should like the letter to be published.

What you say about Englishmen in general is unfortunately true, and the reasons—which make Englishmen feel as they do are the same reasons which I set forth in my letter as causing me to feel nothing but contempt for the Orthodox Hindu. It is impossible for an Englishman to feel otherwise. The small measure of reform that your paper advocates—small in our eyes—immense in the eyes of Hindu Orthodoxy—causes such a commotion. What can we feel but contempt for a people to whom such rudimentary matters in human life are not only reforms but reforms that they won't accept. I only differ from

other Englishmen in looking at you not only as you are, but as you may be and will be—and as some of you are now—men free from the trammels of ignorance. Most Englishmen see you as you are—and look no further. Then it is true of Englishmen as of Hindus that the immense majority do not think at all but simply accept blindly the creed and customs in which they have been born. The difference between us then is simply this, and our creed and customs while in many respects as foolish and unreasonable as yours, do not produce one-tenth of the human evil that yours do. Nevertheless it is religions that keep up race prejudices. I am fortunately outside all religions now and can therefore read history impartially and the thing that strikes me most strongly is that seventy per cent. of the evil that men have done and suffered in the world has been due entirely to religions—that is to disputes regarding their unverifiable opinions held by different races about the Unknown. I am getting off on my favourite subject and must stop. I thought I could not join the Society. You are right. It would do no good, probably harm.

Yours sincerely,

H. O. D. Harding."

(Krishna Dasa Babu was one of our most respected and eminent citizens, and a fearless champion of the Theistic movement and of Social Reform. He gradually rose to the High Court Bench. The Society which Mr. H. refers to is, the Hindu Social Reform Association. Mr. H. does not put the year in his letters and we have to guess it only from a reference to the Madras Civil

List and the year in which he was doing duty at the particular Headquarters. K. S.)

No. II

Egmore,
30-12

"My dear Sir,—Just a line in answer to C. V. Kumaraswami. Strange how people will not understand the position I have taken up. I am amused to see that none of the papers has given the Countess Weech-Master's speech. Her ideal of a perfected humanity through conquering selfishness is what I have tried to teach these 18 months. It is absolutely true; it is not Theosophy at all. It is not found in Hinduism. It is the most enlightened teaching of the most enlightened modern Western materialists. I was delighted to hear it but the *papers* have left it out.

Yours very truly,
H. O. D. Harding."

No. III

Tindivanam,
13-7

Your crusade against concubinage is excellent, you are working at the right end there and I wish you every success. I see many instances of the evil in the maintenance cases which come before me; pictures of domestic life which are monstrous from our point of view.

No. IV

Tindivanam,
12-4-93

"Dear Sir,—Many thanks for the copy of your lecture which I have read with much interest. I agree

entirely with all you say and think the lecture excellent. We need many such lectures and also people to act up to such ideas. I wish all men would read the works of Samuel Lang which sum up so admirably the present state of scientific knowledge and point out what I believe to be the final religious opinions of the world in holding which all nations will become one. The only hope for your Society and mine too, is that cultured reverent agnosticism to which I alluded. There is too little earnestness and real thought among both your people and mine—a conversation I had to-day was interesting. A man said widow re-marriage was wrong, because a wife belonged to the husband's family and must attend his funeral ceremonies; so could not enter another family. Then why must you have funeral ceremonies? To mitigate the punishment the husband's soul is undergoing for his sins on earth. How do you know that? Oh! the elders said so. (That, of course, is no answer but it is the only one known.) If a man deserves punishment how can funeral ceremonies obtain mitigation? Because God so wills. And then we come to the real point. The idea of God is so degraded and this is what people will not see. A God who will let a man off punishment which he deserves because of a petty offering is a God to whom no reasonable man can give worship, and reverence and stands self-convicted—a lie. It is this process of reasoning that destroys all the myths both in Christianity and Hinduism and it is this way that people ought to criticise their so-called religious duties.

I shall be certainly glad to make your acquaintance. I go to Villupuram on Friday three stations off. I shall be there next Sunday and shall be very glad to see you there. If that won't do, I am afraid I shall be away in remote villages for three weeks or so, so will hope to see you later when I return here.

No. V

Tindivanam,
4-12-93

"My dear Sir,—I am going to write and tell you that I had not received 'The *Reformer*' for the 20th November. It has however come to-day, instead of the number for the 2nd December. So I write to let you know as probably there has been some error in despatch. I must congratulate you on the success of the meeting the other day, and on Mr. Subramania Iyer's excellent speech. There is more sense in your paper and the Reform Association than in all the Humes, Symonds, Nortons and Madame Besants that ever reaped the plaudits of the people by tickling their ignorant vanity. I venture to prophesy that the copies of your paper will be valuable in the future when the good sense contained in your notes is commoner property than it is now. I mean it will be rare and eagerly sought after. It is valuable already in a better sense. I have sometimes thought of joining the Social Reform Association but doubt if a European would be of any use. You see in plain truth—and in spite of Madame Besant and her praises of the Hindus—the highest pinnacle of your Social Reform Movement, is as far below an English-

mand's feet, as it is above the ordinary Hindu's head. But I shall be very glad to assist you in any way I can. Has it ever occurred to you that to the European the Hindu as such is a mere curiosity—worthy only of a place in a museum, a people who among other things think it a sin to cross the sea and think further that that sin can be removed by swallowing cowdung. Can we count as people at all—but as mere human curiosities; and the question is not whether school boys can take interest in politics but whether the people of this country are content to remain for ever a collection of—curiosities or whether they wish to become *men* and take their place among the civilised nations of the world.

We are all men, we have a common humanity. But the Hindu is a man plus Hinduism. Now Hinduism is so many useless restraints imposed by society on the liberty of the individual. Therefore a Hindu is a man plus so many useless restraints or in other words he is less than man, and the more bigoted a Hindu, he is the less vigorous in his manhood, till we touch the lowest depth of all—the ignorant Brahmin village priest who is a mere bundle of superstition and ignorance wrapped up in skin and bone. I meant to work up all this into an article but have no time. If any of the ideas strike you as sensible for your notes you are welcome to use them. I shall be very glad to have my name down in the Society if you think it will be of any use."

Yours sincerely,
H. O. D. Harding."

DR. D. DUNCAN

Dr. D. Duncan, the eminent educationist, took a great deal of interest in female education. While he was Director of Public Instruction, I had several interviews with him. He generally sympathised with our efforts and from England once or twice wrote very kind letters. In a letter dated England, 25th May, 1911, he gave expression to the following noble sentiments: "Though I am unable to believe that my work in India and my continued interest in the people of whose sterling qualities of head and heart I had so many proofs during nearly thirty years, are deserving of the praise you bestow upon them, I am nevertheless gratified to know that I am still held in kindly remembrance. I often wish I had my Indian life to live over again: it might be to better purpose".

MR. EARDLEY NORTON.

Mr. Norton was a very powerful and a very trenchant critic when he entered into any controversy. His "*Olla Podrida*" in "*The Hindu*" of those days was indeed a most charming production. His scathing criticism of the Madras Municipal Corporation, of its then paid President and some of its big contractors, provided at the time a great deal of excitement and sensation. If any one acquainted with the present day Municipal Administration of Madras, could spare the time and energy required to search in the files of "*The Hindu*" those comments and see whether any of the defects to which Norton referred, still exist in the same or modified form, he will be doing a valuable service to the public.

As soon as Norton arrived in Madras from England the Government appointed him Coroner. The Office was a paid one. While he was acting in that capacity he once felt aggrieved at some of the observations of "*The Hindu*" against him, and filed a complaint in the Presidency Magistrate's Court. I was not on the staff of "*The Hindu*" at the time. It was almost the first case of defamation against the paper, the Editor was fined, I believe to the extent of Rs. 100. Subsequently as years rolled on, Norton was one of the best friends of the self-same Editor—G. Subramania Iyer—and Norton was an almost untiring correspondent of "*The Hindu*" for some years. His handwriting was very good, but it was exceedingly difficult to decipher. At times we had to spend two to three hours a day in making out some of the words and phrases. Not infrequently did we search in vain for some reliable clue in the Dictionary for the correct spelling of the Latin words and phrases which he used in great profusion. Norton never spared the titled men and aristocracy. Indians of prominent position who were in the good graces of Government incurred Norton's displeasure and he was unwearying in exposing their real or imaginary faults. It must be acknowledged he was an admirable writer and his vigorous classic style added a good deal to the zest of the reading public. At one time he was a staunch adherent of the Indian National Congress and his letter to me which I quote below would show that in those days I was taking an active interest in the elections.

Dunmore House,
Madras.
January 6th, 1894.

Dear Sir,

I take it as a good omen for the Congress cause that its Secretary has been elected to the Supreme Council in Calcutta.

For all your efforts in my behalf pray accept my warmest thanks and believe me.

Yours Sincerly,
Eardley Norton.

SEDITION—THE STRANGEST VIEW

There was an eminent British civilian who had served in the Revenue and Judicial Departments. He was a very talented officer and was a pronounced pro-Indian. At one time of his life, he was in dire distress officially. He had proved offensive to the gods in the blue hills of Ootacamund, and they taught him a severe lesson. They harassed him in all imaginable ways. There is a proverb in Kanarese that when a person is in great trouble, he often takes a vow to God Sri Venkatramana of Tirupathi. Even Indians or Englishmen when they are oppressed by Government, turn for relief to that divinity on earth known in England as the Fourth Estate, the press. The press is the only institution for us—the humblest of us—to set ourselves right with public opinion and the means of ventilating our grievances. The press of all shades of opinion espoused warmly the cause of this civilian

gentleman. I often met him walking in the hot sun at Madras with ponderous manuscripts in his capacious coat pocket all the way to *"The Hindu"* office, and every day when he came there, he had to pass my room before he entered the Editor's to hand over the manuscripts and have a talk with him. Naturally we became acquainted with each other. In the end he won even against the Government of Madras and also rose a step in the official ladder. Just on the eve of his retirement and his bidding farewell to Madras for all times. I took the trouble of calling, on him to express my appreciation of his career and his love of India. It was a fine morning, the bungalow on the banks of the silvery Cooum, was a spacious one. The garden was full of beautiful, sweet smelling flowers. The birds were singing the glory of God. It was about 7-30 a.m. My host ordered two chairs in the midst of the garden, and we had what is known as a heart to heart talk. I ventured forth a request that while in England and in his retirement he would kindly do everything possible to promote the interests of India. At once he assumed a serious look and said to me: "You, Mr. G. Subramania and Mr. Veeraraghava—all three of you are a seditious lot". I was most painfully surprised, I never expected such a remark from him. I thought within myself what a good reward we had for all the warmth with which *"The Hindu"* had advocated his cause during the days he was down hearted. I requested him to explain the grounds of his charge and expressed my regret at such an observation on his part. He at once smiled and said

"Please have patience. I am going to convict you of sedition out of your own mouth. If I make you confess the charge, you won't be angry with me". I welcomed the offer. For he had studied and administered the law. I wondered how he was going to make me confess I was guilty of sedition. He then proceeded thus: " Please place your hand on your heart. Tell me whether you do not cherish that some day, be it centuries hence, India should be free of all foreign control and influence. It may not be in your life time or mine. It may not be in 50 or 100 years. But do you and your friends of the press, cherish this ambition—this hope—that some day, however, distant India would be perfectly free. Please answer me". I said " Certainly we do". He said "then I call you seditious. That is my view of sedition. My first and last duty is to England and Great Britain. I can never tolerate the idea of my country ever losing any part of its world-wide influence. So I consider every small item—which is likely to diminish our opportunities or our sphere of influence—as sedition. It is not the Indian Penal Code I am discussing with you. It is my view of politics. Holding this view how can I honestly promise to help you in your political efforts and ambitions".

I was perfectly satisfied with this explanation. I admired his candour and his love of his own country and countrymen. I said to myself when Indians in similar responsible positions cherish similar views regarding their own country and their own influence and

are as bold as this civilian to acknowledge them to their English friends, on that day we can say we have fully benefited by our contact with British Civilians and with English literature. I thanked him for his enlightening me on my sedition and pleaded fully guilty of it. I knew I was free from all further obligations or chastisement for such a plea.

MR. R. B. PLUMMER.

When I entered the Mysore service, almost the first British Officer with and under whom I had to work, was Mr. Plummer who subsequently presided over the Judicial administration of the State. Both of us were under the then Plague Commissioner Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao. Mr. Plummer's esteemed father was a famous Madras Civilian Judge and his services had been borrowed by the Mysore administration to act as Chief Judge.

The son by his own merits and life-long service in several departments gradually rose to the same position. He was a domiciled Mysorean in every sense of the term.

The years 1898 to 1900 were most trying for the State. The plague in all its ugly fury was making the greatest slaughter and when I look back on that period I have nothing but intense admiration both for the officers who worked so hard and the bulk of the people who were so good and easily amenable to sympathetic advice and unavoidable restrictions that had to be imposed. Turbulent elements there were—here and there —but they were all most masterfully controlled and handled by Mr. Madhava Rao.

In Mr. Plummer I found three or four prominent excellent characteristics.

(*a*) He never deviated even an inch from facts as they actually occurred, whatever may be their bearing on himself or others.

(*b*) His intense interest in his subordinates and in their welfare. Once one of the clerks had an attack of plague. He was so much afraid that he did not inform the office and did not even apply for leave. Mr. Plummer made the most diligent enquiry and asked his office staff to make a search. When at last he got the true information, he made all possible efforts to save the unfortunate clerk and the latter recovered.

(*c*) When Mr. Plummer was conscious that any of those working under him were denied the promotion in service which was their due, he used to represent their case as forcibly as he could and did not save himself from as much trouble as it might involve to see justice done.

The plague was an Imperial concern and the Plague Commissioner's Office had to correspond with British Civilian Officers at times. Once one of the latter found fault with the office under a misapprehension and without due verification of his supposition. To the whole staff, it was a matter of dignity of the office to be maintained and from this point of view it caused some temporary excitement. I was intimately associated with Mr. Plummer in the daily routine and had to submit files to him. When I took this particular file, he asked me to prove our case and when I did it to his satisfaction, he

at once dashed a fiery letter full of unconcealed sarcasm which satisfied me very much. It was a delicate situation and it required more than ordinary courage to handle the matter as efficiently as he did. I then said to myself "Here is a Britisher who would fight for the Darbar and ourselves more boldly than any of us could".

MR. (SIR) MACONOCHIE, I.C.S.

This Bombay Civilian who was Private Secretary to his Highness the Maharaja for about 7 years from 1902 to 1909 was a very fascinating figure. He was a delightful personality to talk to. His frank advice and sympathy was to me a source of great consolation during that period, surrounded as I was then with peculiar difficulties. The fact was that when I entered the service, the party spirit was at its highest. In 1897 as soon as I returned from Baroda, one of the Indian papers published at Bangalore—then three times a week —openly accused me of writing a leading article in "The *Hindu*" on a Mysore topic in which reference had been made both to the Dewan and the Resident. I was called upon officially to explain and I contradicted the report under my own signature. I knew several of my high-placed opponents had circulated a rumour that I was a relative of Mr. Madhava Rao, and that Sir Seshadri Iyer had entertained me in service to extol him in the Press. While however the bare fact was that for the gracious orders of His Highness the late Maharaja on my application submitted in person by Mr. Monro and the intercession on my behalf of Lord Wenlock in

February, 1896 I would not have been able to enter the Mysore service. I emphasise this point to save the memory of Mr. Madhava Rao's and Sir Seshadri Iyer's administration from any direct responsibility for my introduction. I was first put as a supernumerary, then in the plague department and when it was likely to be closed, my very official existence was in doubt. It was then that the orders of His Highness the present Maharaja—almost among the first acts after His Highness' assumption of the State affairs—confirming in every detail the recommendations of the Revenue Commissioner wherein a provision was made for me were received. Then I thought it my duty to make the acquaintance of the Private Secretary. The very first question he put to me was full of significance. He asked me whether I was the Madras journalist who, it was rumoured, had been smuggled into the service during the Regency period? I welcomed this inquiry and showed him among other original papers the letters of Mr. Monro to me. He was much pleased and convinced. Mr. Monro was acquainted with him. He recognised his handwriting and after giving me a full hour, assured me of his sympathy. From that day, during all the time of his stay in Mysore, I had free access to him.

During the year 1900-1906 I realised what a great risk a journalist ran in accepting a subordinate office. Every criticism against the administration in whatever papers they appeared, in Mysore or Madras or Bombay was generally attributed to me. I was supposed to be in league with the two brave brothers, Gopala Iyengar

and Srinivasa Iyengar who were then editing "The *Mysore Standard*" and who happened to live near me in Basvangudi. Once "The *Standard* office was broken open at night and only the manuscripts were stolen. All other things were left in tact. Next morning I was informed that the object of breaking open the locks and taking away the papers was under some powerful instigation and that the object was to incriminate me by finding out my manuscript in that Newspaper office. But no manuscripts of any importance were found and it was merely a day's wonder.

The only foundation for such a charge was that I was always accessible to journalists who called on me. The *Standard* brothers used to meet me often at nights to exchange views and I was not afraid to keep company with them and offer them such suggestions and advice as I thought it my duty to tender. Journalism is as much an uniting bond as free Masonry without signs, banquets and subscriptions. The purely official mind cannot generally fathom the depths of the journalistic instinct. However I had to suffer silently for all my supposed sins.

At about this juncture, once I approached Mr. Maconochie for advice and help. He told me frankly that I was thought to be a fierce agitator against the executive heads of the administration and that the bitter criticisms appearing in the papers were somehow connected with my name. I then asked him why I should not be dealt with as such an offender should and why I should not be tried on such a charge. Mr. Maconochie

had a hearty laugh and said that there was absolutely no evidence against me and no proof was forthcoming. He added, that, therefore, I was not disturbed but promotion was a different thing. It comes only to those whom the executive heads recommend and that I could not expect such recommendation. I was considerably relieved and thenceforth resolved to abandon all attempts at advancement, till there was a change in the executive head.

Subsequently such a change did occur and I had my chance.

It was in the Mysore Exhibitions of 1907 and 1908 that I came in close contact with Mr. Maconochie. I was the Secretary to the Committee. Mr. M. was one of the leading members and took a great deal of personal interest. In 1908, the Committee at first resolved not to publish a catalogue before the opening of the exhibition. The decision was due to the difficulty of reconciling the exhibits promised with those actually received and to a feeling that if the catalogue was framed after the opening of the exhibition, it might be more accurate. However, 3 days before the exhibition Mr. Maconochie proposed the immediate publication of the catalogue and the Committee approved of it. I agreed to the publication in time. Mr. Maconochie was rather anxious about me, called me aside after the meeting was over and asked me whether I could fulfil the promise and warned me what it would signify if I failed in it. I, however, gave him the assurance and on the third day morning, he rode on his favourite horse to the

exhibition grounds and took from me 3 copies of the catalogue and was immensely pleased with me. He had told me plainly before hand that it was not possible to get it ready in time. I was in Mysore, the work had to be done in Bangalore and in about a day and a half; I achieved this mainly through the devotion of my staff and the great help I received from Mr. Yates and Mr. Ramchandra Mudaliar of the Government Press. They worked their special staff for a day and a whole night at my request at a time when their hands were full with urgent work.

In conclusion, I hold Mr. Maconochie's name in my grateful recollection as one of the civilians who were excellently disposed towards me. Once he invited me for a discussion on Indian politics and the attitude of "The *Hindu*", and when I declined the offer with the reason that, if I agreed with him, it will be attributed to his official position, but if I differed as I was bound to do, it might cause unpleasantness, he dropped the subject.

LORD AMPTHILL

In 1903, to divert my mind from purely official or domestic anxieties, I wrote a booklet called "The Future of India". Messrs. Srinivasa Vardachari and Co., Madras, kindly undertook to publish it for me. When I had passed the proof of the last form, a doubt arose as to whether I should publish it in my own name. The work could not divest itself of its political complexion. The rules of the Government service are very rigorous in regard to how far subordinate officers can

afford to play with such a consuming fire as practical politics. To be on the safe side, I published it under the somewhat audacious *nom-de-plume* of Gautama. Under that name I sent the book for review and opinion. The entire Madras Press had a very kind word about it. Lord Ampthill, the then Governor of Madras, appreciated it much and the Private Secretary, while communicating to me His Excellency's opinion, gave me a hint that I may announce myself in my true colours. This opinion was so encouraging that the next day I submitted two copies to Mr. Maconochie. Subsequently Lord Ampthill gave me an interview on his return from Simla after acting as Viceroy.

MR. J. B. PENNINGTON, I.C.S.

Mr. Pennington, who was contributing often to the newspapers on Indian topics, was frequently writing to me. I do not believe I deserve any part of the praise which he so lavishly gives me. However, I reproduce his letters here now to do him full justice and to show how heartily a British civilian can appreciate the literary labours of an Indian writer of no high official or political status.

West Dane,
2nd May, 1904.

"Dear Sir,

I have read your little book with the most sincere pleasure. By what seems to me your most reasonable remarks on caste, you have fully justified your assumption of the name "Gautama", which I was at first inclined to think somewhat audacious.

I don't think there is anything in the book to which Buddha would have objected and I cannot give it higher praise, for I have always regarded Buddhism as the Protestant Reformation of Brahminism and regretted its ultimate failure in India. But I mean of course the Buddhism of Buddha, not its modern corruption; just as in speaking of Christianity I should mean the Christianity of Christ. Your chapters on the condition of women and the remarriage of woman seem to me especially admirable, and I can only say that I endorse every word of them and wish I could have written them myself. If I can find an opportunity of reviewing the book, I shall be delighted to do my best for it; and if you are issuing a second edition, I should consider it an honour to revise the very few passages which seem to require some correction. It is written in such quite exceptionally good English that it seems a pity it is not just a little better in places and a very few corrections would make it good enough to pass muster as the work of a highly educated European, and I must congratulate you most heartily on what seems to me a remarkable achievement for a Hindu and, above all, for a Brahmin. Such commonsense as you display throughout the book is to me most encouraging.

It is the fashion in England as well as in India to look upon an official of my kind as a quite hopeless sort of creature, but my experience is that official work is not a disqualification and that a sensible official (there

are of course plenty of the other sort) is rather an improvement on his non-official brother.

Believe me, yours very truly,
J. B. Pennington".

Mr. Pennington took a great deal of interest in the political advancement of India. As might be expected, he did not agree with the most advanced Indian politicians. But he was far in advance of his civilian brethren in his breadth of view. In a letter, dated 2nd February, 1902 from England he wrote to me as follows:—

"I beg to say what seems to me the truth about India but I am not at all satisfied with the present state of India and I should very much like to know what you educated natives really think of Mr. Dadabhai's ideas and also of Mr. Digby's book. We are all agreed that India is not as prosperous as we should like, and personally I am quite inclined to think that the cost of the present Government is intolerable. But the question is what can be done. Investigation of course is a remedy; but it is not possible everywhere. Mr. Hyndman's remedy now is "government by natives under light European supervision", as in Mysore; but would he or could anyone, yet abolish the English Army? Could the Mysore Government go on unless it was assured of peace throughout the country? You might give the world a great deal of valuable information from your Mysore experience.

"I cannot believe that the average income in India is $\frac{3}{4}d$ a day; even in India no one could live on $\frac{3}{4}d$ a day.

"Please thank your father for his note. I am afraid he has met with no success. It would be one great reform if everyone would get justice in India.

Believe me, Yours very truly,

J. B. Pennington".

In another letter, dated 11th November, 1905 West Dane Yarmouth, he wrote to me as follows:—

"You are quite right about the strength of official red tape; we are all strangled in it. I should be glad to see what you say of the Swadeshi movement with which I am in sympathy so long as it is commercial or economical and not political. We are alike interested in developing the resources of India and 'Swadeshi' is—it seems to me—a perfectly legitimate form of protection. What effect it might have on your export trade I don't quite see; but I am afraid it is certain that if you don't buy you can't sell, and if you lose your foreign trade, you may be getting out of the frying pan into the fire and the people may be poorer than ever. I don't know".

Somehow Indian problems, like Cleopatra's charms, always remain fresh and fascinating. They appear to be insoluble. If any of us take the first five years' proceedings of the Indian National Congress from 1885 to 1889, successively and read the speeches and the resolutions recorded in them, and again refer to the present day political conditions, it will be found in spite of the

very many years that have passed in the interval, some of the Indian questions then debated upon still await solution. That is my excuse for quoting some of these old letters.

SIR S. M. FRASER, I.C.S.

This gentleman was at one time Tutor to His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore. Then I used to meet him casually. Several years afterwards, he came to Bangalore as British Resident. I was agreeably surprised at his remembering me after the lapse of years and inviting me to the Residency, brushing aside the rules of official precedence, according to which I never expected any invitation. In his letter to me, dated March 23, 1911, Rustom Lodge, Wellington Road, Bourne-Mouth, he assured me of his abiding interest in his Mysore acquaintances in the following terms: "I am still a diligent reader of '*The Madras Mail*' for the sake of its column devoted to Bangalore and I cannot easily imagine the time when the affairs of my Mysore, friends will fail to interest me".

SIR A. T. ARUNDEL, I.C.S.

This was an officer of very austere temper and in his early career had established a reputation for strict discipline and a rather severe temper. As years rolled on and when he came to Madras as a member of the Government, he cultivated a literary temperament and freely presided over meetings at which literary or social reform subjects were discussed. I was in the habit of calling on him pretty occasionally. I need hardly add

that his temperament was not suited to encourage personal ambitions and my talk with him was almost always purely confined to public matters. Even then I used to find, we more often agreed to differ in our views. But I appreciated his dignified bearing and his courteous demeanour. In a letter, dated 3rd February, 1911,—"Uplands, Maybury Hill, Woking" he wrote to me as follows:—

"I am very glad to hear that the sons of Mr. Krishna Rao, whom I knew as Town Sub-Magistrate of Kumbakonam, forty-three years ago, are as distinguished for their loyalty as for their ability. You yourself appear to have had a varied and very interesting career and you had the privilege of intimate association and collaboration with that very distinguished man, my old friend, Mr. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar whose comparatively early death was so widely regretted.

Your brother, Mr. Vyasa Rao, made a unique and suggestive speech last Monday at a meeting of the East India Association, with Lord Ampthill in the chair, at which a one-sided and pessimistic paper was read by a—on 'Race prejudice in India'. I had a long talk with your brother two days later when he had tea with me.

With cordial wishes for your continued health and success.

I am, yours truly,
A. T. Arundel".

SIR JAMES THOMPSON, I.C.S.

From the time he was Collector of Tanjore, I was acquainted with him. While he was a member of Government at Madras, I once called on him on a hot afternoon; he was very busy with office files. The despatch boxes were so many in number that then I had some idea of the number of papers that had to pass through him. Unaided he was most laborious in his scrutiny and explained to me how hard he had to work. He used to correspond with me both while he was in India and subsequently after he went to England. In a letter, dated 29th January, 1906, Burdwan, Bengal, he cheered me up thus: "No doubt you are employing profitably such leisure as falls to an official and doing good in your day and generation, with your pen and voice. My work is nearly done now".

After the outbreak of the Great War, he was rather unhappy and in his letter to me, dated 30-1-16, Torrington House, St. Albans, he said: "At present it is a time of great trouble and sorrow to many. And there is much more and worse to come I fear.

"I hope you are prospering and advancing as you deserve. For me, my time is drawing to a close, and I would fain see a happier world before I depart. But none of it is in my making. It is well for you in Bangalore that you do not have troubles at your gates".

SIR WILLIAM MEYER, I.C.S.

This distinguished financier who commenced his career in Madras had always a warm corner in his heart for all his Madras acquaintances. Years after he left

Madras and when he had risen high he took an interest in Madras men. He was constantly writing to me in reply to my letters. The following few extracts have some bearing on public matters:—

No. I

United Service Club, Simla,
5th August, 1912.

"Dear Mr. Subba Rao,

Your new work as Secretary to the Economic Conference must be very interesting. It is as you say, a novel experiment but I hope that it will prove a success and the choice of its Secretary goes towards this hope. . . .

I was not at all anxious to come out on this Army Committee, and only did so in deference to the desire of Lord Crew and the Viceroy. Having come out, however, I find the work quite interesting, and it has been pleasant to renew relations with old friends at Simla. When the Committee's work is over—at present's an uncertain date—I hope to return to England.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,
W. S. Meyer".

No. II

74, Under Hill Road,
Delhi, 14th December, 1913.

"Many thanks for your book on Loyalty, Morality and Religion which you have kindly sent to me. It will give me much pleasure to read it when I can find the necessary leisure at present I am simply piled up with work.

I hope you are flourishing in every way.

The Viceroy's visit to Mysore seems to have been a great success and their Excellencies enjoyed it much.

With best wishes".

No. III.

The Retreat,
Simla, 15th September, 1914.

" Many thanks for your most kind sympathy in my great sorrow. My wife had, as you know, been an invalid for some years past—indeed she never recovered from the shock of our boy's death, but there has been no reason, to suppose that she would not eventually win back to health and strength or to anticipate the sudden malady, affection of the heart with complications that has rendered my hopes for her vain.

No. IV.

The Retreat,
Simla, 8th June, 1915.

" Very many thanks for your kind congratulations and for what you say in regard to the rumours of my retirement. These are however quite unfounded. I have no intention of giving up my post so long as I feel fit to discharge its duties, and at present I am in quite good health".

No. V.

31, Rajpur Road,
Delhi, 31st December, 1916.

"As you surmise, this is a very difficult and anxious time for me, especially now when the Budget for the

coming year has to be taken in hand. But it is all very interesting and so long as I feel that I am doing some service to the country I take the toil cheerfully.

With all the best wishes.

No. VI.

Delhi, 13th March, 1917.

"This year's Budget gave me more trouble and anxiety than any I have had to bring forward and I am very pleased that it has been so well received throughout the country".

No. VII.

31, Rajpur Road,
Delhi, 7th March, 1918.

"Dear Mr. Subba Rao,

I am much pleased at the way in which the Budget has been received throughout India. I shall remain in office till the end of August and after that shall for some time have no fixed address, as I propose to tour at leisure in China, Japan, America and Canada before settling down in England. But any letter sent to me to care of Finance Department will reach me in due course.

Yours sincerely,
W. S. Meyer".

MR. H. BEAUCHAMP, C.I.E.

From the days of Mr. (subsequently Sir) Charles Lawson down to the close of the days of Mr. Henry Beauchamp, I was an occasional contributor to the columns of *"The Madras Mail"*. I was personally acquainted with the several Editors and used to call on

them. The fact that *"The Hindu"* and *"The Mail"* took diverse routes in politics and in those days each had to hit the other hard at times in the exigencies of daily discussion, did not prevent me from utilizing the columns of *"The Mail"* for propagandistic work in matters in which we agreed. Indeed when our Social Reform fight was at its highest pitch, myself and a few friends of mine like Mr. A. Subba Rao, managed to ventilate our views through all the Madras newspapers, *"The Hindu"*, *'The Mail'*, *'The Madras Times'*, and *"The Madras Standard"*. Such incessant harping on the same topic throughout the Madras Press, had at the time a tremendous effect. In fact three of us soon found out that by sheer application daily to the art of writing we could bear down easily considerable odds on the opposite side who were for the time being nonplussed at what they conceived to be a formidable echo of the same song.

Mr. Beauchamp was a very kind-hearted gentleman, very laborious, always at work. He used to do his day's work almost standing and had made to order a high table specially for enabling him to do all his urgent work in a standing posture. At times his temper rose high. But I found it a pleasure to exchange views with him. He was very appreciative of Indian talent. Once I happened to go to the Senate House on the convocation day with Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, whose Personal Assistant I was then. Mr. Madhava Rao was ex-officio President of the Mysore Maharani's College Committee and in that capacity was nominated a member of the Senate.

After the Convocation was over, when I was following Mr. Madhava Rao, Mr. Beauchamp from behind, pulled me by the long coat and asked me. "Who is the gentleman you are following?" I replied, "Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao. Do you not know him?" He said, "He is a most remarkable man. This is the first time I see him. I have not met another intellectual face so striking as this. I shall be most happy to make his acquaintance. He is really a very unique personality in all India".

Some time afterwards a very exciting episode occurred. I narrate it mainly to show how good Mr. Beauchamp was to me, when I convinced him I was in the right, though according to him I had given him cause for great provocation.

His Excellency, the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, came to Mysore in 1900; I believe, Mr. T. R. A. Thambu Chettiar was then acting as Dewan, as Sir K. Sheshadri Aiyar was on leave. At that time the adherents of both Sir P. N. Krishnamurti and V. P. Madhava Rao were carrying on a diligent campaign in the Madras and even in the Bombay press about the claims for preferment of each. On the day His Exellency reached Mysore, "*The Madras Mail*" which reached Mysore the same day, had as second leader, an article headed "*The Brahmin Plague Commissioner*".

It was a most virulent attack on Mr. Madhava Rao and his plague administration which had been till then pronounced a great success both in the press and the platform, and by the authorities interested in the well-being

of the people. As Personal Assistant, it was a part of my duty to defend the State and the administration and I did it in as spirited a manner as I could. The sting of an article generally lies either in the opening paragraph or in the closing one. The human heart is not satisfied unless it flings as much mud as it can on the opposite party. True to the traditions of vigorous writing, in the very first few sentences I had made a broad and plain insinuation that the great wealth of the opposite party had blinded the judgment of the writer of the leading article complained against. Mr. Beauchamp with that spirit of impartiality which characterises high class journalists all over India—Indian or Anglo-Indian, published my protest, word by word, without any omission or alteration. Of course in this instance as in the generality of cases, the contradiction did not produce one-tenth the effect which the original attack had. Few people read a contradiction, fewer still modify the first impression created. Then in the readers' opinion, leading articles have special sanctity, though often written by interested parties while a contradiction from a correspondent is put down as a part of party tactics. However I had the consolation of doing a duty assigned to me.

Months after, when I went to Madras, I called on Mr. Beauchamp as usually I used to do. I invariably called at such times at "*The Hindu*" and "*The Mail*" offices. Mr. B. flew into a rage as soon as my card was taken to him. Then when he sent for me and I had taken a comfortable chair, opposite to where he was

standing, he closed his fist and striking hard on the table said: "How did you dare, Sir, to call on me after having made such an insinuation against me? I did not wish to see you at all. But I thought it better to have your explanation if you have any".

I had forgotten wholly what I had written months ago. So many Mysore sensations had occurred in the interval. However realising the situation I was in and the pitch of anger to which Mr. Beauchamp had been driven at my presence, I at once attempted to pacify him. I said, "In my contribution I was careful to use the words 'The writer of the leading article'. As a journalist, I am aware the Editor is not invariably the writer of all the leading articles. Even supposing it was otherwise, when the writer had the privilege to make all unfounded assumptions against Mr. Madhava Rao and his administration, have I not the privilege as his Personal Assistant and in the discharge of my duty, to make counter assumptions and to put in as strong a defence as possible? You did your duty as the Editor and I did mine as Personal Assistant. Now we meet as old acquaintances. I have not come here now to talk on Mysore politics. Life will not be worth-living if we carry with us all the twenty-four hours of the day our office responsibility".

Mr. Beauchamp was calm and there was a change in his countenance. He appreciated my candour and spent a precious half hour in the most friendly exchange of views. Subsequently whenever we met, he was very

kind. In his letter, dated 9th December, 1901 he offered his sincere thanks for my good feeling towards him.

On the 1st January, 1902 he wrote to me: "It is most encouraging to obtain such appreciation of my efforts in "*The Madras Mail*" to do justice and to forward the interests of Indians and Europeans alike".

His last letter to me was dated 3rd January, 1905 and ran thus:

" I am much obliged to you for unburdening your mind about local affairs. It is only from such sources that we 'Arm-chair critics' can judge of the course of events in distant places. I have read your book 'The Future of India' and cannot but admire its straight speaking and insight although I may differ from some of the conclusions.

"I feel sure that social reform in its many branches will be realised as time goes on. But it must go slowly under the peculiar nature of Indian social and religious conditions. Hasten the pace and you excite opposition from the Hindus' innermost hearts which are so conservative and religiously fearsome, if I may say so".

LORD WENLOCK

Lord Wenlock invariably wrote to me from England. In his letter, dated January 22, 1902, York, he referred thus to the late Mr. Maccartie, I.C.S.,—"Mr. Maccartie's death was a very great loss to me. He was a most excellent specimen of an English Officer in every respect and his untimely death has been mourned by a large circle of personal friends".

In May 1904 referring to *"The Future of India"*, he wrote to me thus:

"I have read it with much interest. It covers many of the problems of the utmost importance connected with the welfare of the people of India. But as many of them are of a highly controversial character, I should not wish that my views on them should be published.

At the same time I think the public should be pleased at the manner in which you have brought them forward and the literary skill with which you have presented the case from different stand-points".

CHAPTER XLI

THE MYSORE JUBILEE

ITS SIGNIFICANCE

THE MAHARAJA'S ACHIEVEMENTS

I shall at the present stage of my long drawn out story, make a temporary departure to a side track and divert my attention for a while to the most auspicious and the most gratifying incident of the Jubilee celebration of His Highness the Maharaja Saheb's rule for the past 25 years. Time flies further than any human invented Aeroplane or Wireless. It seems to me as but yesterday I was in Mysore on the day on which His Highness assumed charge of the sovereignty of the State, and lo! 25 years have passed as a pleasant dream.

ITS UNIQUE CHARACTER

Tracing Mysore History backwards, we find for nearly $7\frac{1}{2}$ years from February 1895 to August 1902, Mysore was under the sway of Her Highness the Maharani Regent assisted by the Regency Council and the Hon'ble the British Resident. Prior to it, for 14 years from 1881 till December 1894, His Highness the Maharaja Sri Chamarajendra Wodayar Bahadur was the first ruler of the State after the Rendition, and during that short period His Highness raised Mysore to the

status of a model State in India. Prior to 1881 for the long and eventful period of 50 years from 1831, the State was under the direct control of the highly efficient agency of the British Commission. Prior to the British Commission in 1831, the far-famed grandfather of the present Maharaja of the same name was ruler of the State for a period of 20 years from 1811 till 1831. For a period of 11 or 12 years prior to 1811 from the year 1799, the year of the demise of Tippu Sultan in the seige of Seringapatam, Mr. Purnayya, the illustrious Brahmin Prime Minister, who had seen the rise of Hyder Ali Khan (born to create an Empire) and the fall of his son Tippu Sultan (born to lose one) and who had served both the father and the son, was Dewan-Regent. Prior to 1799 for a period of 38 years from 1761 Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan were the real rulers of Mysore. Thus during the last 166 years—there is no need to go backwards beyond 1761 into the medieval period of Indian History—no Hindu sovereign has ruled continuously for 25 years over Mysore. Thus it is only in the year of grace 1927 that we have the proud privilege of witnessing the year of the Jubilee and the satisfaction of taking part in it. Primarily it is all due to the mercy and grace of divine Providence. It is a providential gift of the most inestimable value to Mysore, and it is in a prayerful spirit that I narrate the subject. Such an event has not occurred in the lifetime of anyone in Mysore now living and it is but appropriate that it should be celebrated with all the enthusiasm and the spontaniety which such a singularly unquie event

should evoke and with a splendour worthy of the august occasion. The celebration should leave behind some permanent memorial which would keep alive in the memory of generations yet unborn the celebrations of August 1927 and the reason for the same.

ITS POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE

A somewhat rough but none the less accurate estimate of the political significance of the Jubilee may be formed, if we take a bird's-eye view of the practical results achieved on account of the interest evinced by His Highness in the governance of the State and in holding the reins with steadfast loyalty to the abiding interests of the people, with consummate skill, so as to overcome obstacles and difficulties incidental to such an exalted status as the ruler of a kingdom. We must realise that to all of us, high or low, disappointments and painful surprises, are but normal phenomena of our worldly existence. The common bond of humanity lies not in lonely grandeur and outward splendour but in the disabilities which invariably are the unfailing attributes of all humanity. If we keep this in view, and think what politically Mysore was 25 years ago, we can assert without fear of contradiction that Mysore, (with all its defects and I am fully aware of them) has in this period risen very high in the public opinion of British India and other Indian States and even outside India. Mysore has a unique reputation of its own as a well-established and well-governed State, wholly free from all medieval practices and traditions in the art of Govern-

ment. A good number of the Indian States lay a great deal of stress on their Treaty rights and long established traditions observed with unbroken continuity. In the case of Mysore, the British occupation of the country for 50 years and the Instrument of Transfer were casting a shadow on the political aspect. During this period of the Jubilee, the Instrument of Transfer has been replaced by a Treaty. More than this, a number of conventions, have been fostered under the statesmanship of His Highness by successive Ministers whereby Mysore commands in actual everyday political affairs a far higher political consideration than other States which have on their side both Treaties and established usage for a longer period.

CAPACITY TO GET WORK DONE

One great test of a capable and wise ruler is the capacity to select Ministers and get the best work out of them. My late lamented friend the Darbar Bakshi whom I have referred to so often, frequently was telling me that sovereignty was similar to horsemanship and just as a capable rider is he who can control spirited and restless horses, even so rulers of Indian States have often to control very capable Ministers having their own whims and caprices, just like fine spirited Arabs and it required no small courage and presence of mind for the handling of the Ministers on the part of a Maharaja if he were to establish a name for himself. His Highness has had to get work during the past 25 years from Sir P. N. Krishnamurthi, V. P. Madhava Rao, T. Ananda

Rao, Sir M. Visveswarayya, Sir M. Kantaraj Urs and Sir A. R. Banerji, excluding the present Dewan. The bare mention of the six names would show how every one of them differed from the other in their aims, temperaments, methods and previous training. Few critics, however charitable, can afford to withhold their admiration from a ruler who in the very prime of youth had to get the best he and his State could from the above Ministers and whose duty it was to put his seal of approval or disapproval over the decisions and recommendations submitted by them, to call them to office and to permit them to enjoy their well-earned rest at the moment His Highness desired to give the State a change of Ministry.

GLORIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS

During the past 25 years the conditions of Mysore have been greatly altered for the better. The establishment of the Mysore University, of a State-aided Bank, of a Sandalwood-oil Factory, of the Economic Conference, Railway Extensions, the Kannambadi Scheme, the Bhadravati enterprise, the creation of the Legislative Council, the development of the Co-operative Movement, the introduction of elected Municipal President for Bangalore and the free spirit of criticism both in the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council, bear indelible testimony to the high and patriotic aims of the ruler. That the State has had to spend a good deal of money and even to borrow funds in the public market, reflects favourably on the courage of His Highness. In my view it is a great god—send that

money should be spent liberally on schemes and projects than that it should be hoarded for being wasted and the State left in a condition of stagnation. A State gets money mainly from its subjects. If it is returned to them in some shape or other, in the shape of wages for town improvement, employment of skilled and unskilled labour, widening spheres of employment for the educated, by creation of new offices and establishments, then such expenditure is far better and more wholesome than that squandered by rulers in frequent travels to foreign countries and on a few select favourites. The one State in all India that I know of whose budgets and expenses may stand good in comparison with those of provincial British Indian Administrations is Mysore.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL ASPECT

In strict logic and political reasoning, the Mysore administration is an autocratic one, in the sense that the Executive is not under the control of the Legislature. After all what weighs is His Highness's personal writ or orders or the orders of His Highness's Ministers. The Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council may advise the Dewan. But he is not bound to respect the advice. He may respect them if he agrees. That is the exact situation as I understand it. I am afraid it cannot be otherwise so long as the existing Treaty arrangements and public declarations of policy by His Excellency the Viceroy as the representative of His Majesty stand as they are. According to these it is the

ruler of the State that is held responsible for the good government of the State, and not he and his subjects. Power goes with responsibility. No person can be held personally responsible for the welfare of his subjects unless he possesses also supreme power. If the power were transferred to or shared with the people or their representatives, what guarantee is there that such delegated powers will not be abused? If the power of veto is retained, then autocracy will be still there. In democratic countries like America, we know how the Republics are working. What is there to prevent in any State the predominating party from insisting on the score of the majority to carry out their will and pleasure. Indian States can be brought into a line with British India only when British India solves the problem for itself and not till then. Subject to this reservation, the Mysore administration is as much an enlightened, a benevolent and a highly centralised bureaucracy as British India. It is perhaps one of the few States which has reached a pitch of exellence in imitating and adapting to its own needs the methods practised in British India. His Highness has all along respected the constitutional principle of abiding by the advice of the responsible Ministers and very few, if at all any, should be the instances when His Highness overruled in toto the decisions of the Ministers and the Finance Secretary. No Minister, however, has ever resigned his office on principle because he was unwilling to carry out a policy against the grain of his conscience. Of course, the Ministers are not responsible to the people.

But it will be time to think of this when in British India the executive is put completely under the control of the legislature and the effects of such a system are visible in everyday affairs of the administration. I can only say that in this respect Mysore will compare most favourably with the best of the Indian States in other parts of India. It is only comparative constitutional position that I am referring to now, not in the absolute as to what the ideal should be. Here I shall narrate an interesting anecdote. At one of the meetings of the Representative Assembly or Economic Conference, (I forget which) one day, a leading member of the legal profession, who alas! is no more in the land of the living, said publicly he would be glad to take up the responsibility of the entire administration, abolish the office of Dewan and Councillors and Secretaries and all costly establishment, after guaranteeing the Civil List and the subsidy, if he were allowed to do so. One of my friends put it to me that what the speaker wanted was to become a Dictator—he and his friends in the place of His Highness. Mysore is the one State where such talk in public and in State Assemblies is not frowned upon. I heartily appreciated the Dewan —President's patient smile with which he listened to the suggestion.

THE FINANCE

During the past 25 years His Highness has had in his hands the power of distributing about 80 crores of rupees at a rough estimate. Out of this amount I believe the subsidy came to 8¾ crores and the Civil List

about 5 crores. Making an allowance of 1¼ crores for other unforeseen items, the remaining money to the extent of 65 crores have been spent on the State in some shape or other. A good portion of this money has gone to the pockets of Indians, officers and workmen. To add to the element of romance, even speculative schemes have benefited experts, indigenous and foreign. England, America, Italy and Canada have not been excluded from participating in the hospitality of the Mysore financial distribution. How world-wide has been the sympathy of Mysore. British India has not been ignored. Both in the Mysore service and in the birthday and Dasera celebrations, British India, alien and indigenous—has had hospitable treatment. So Mysore has been, under the guidance of His Highness, not living for itself but it is an all India State just as England is an important centre for keeping up the financial and political balance of the entire world.

THE MAHARAJA'S DEVOTION TO DUTY

By the inscrutable decrees of Providence His Highness, in his very boyhood, at a time when compeers of his age are in their schools, was called upon to take on himself the heavy responsibilities devolving on the head of a State and of the family. It was in February 1895 that I had a fairly good glimpse of His Highness while he was engaged most attentively in the performance of his formal functions. The seriousness of the political, social and religious status of His Highness at that

young age appealed most forcibly to us the assembled audience. It will be readily and cheerfully conceded by all who have been in Mysore that in the past 32 years that have elapsed since then His Highness's hands had a most strenuous time in the discharge of his multifarious duties and the manner in which His Highness has acquitted himself redounds greatly to the credit of Mysore. For, the Rulers of States have to live more for the benefit of their States and subjects than merely for themselves. Herein lies the vast difference between Princess and the ordinary people.

SOME REMARKABLE TRAITS

My experience of Indian magnates and nobility is fairly wide. I have therefore been struck with astonishment at some of the remarkably fine traits in His Highness. What has often extorted my admiration is the scrupulous care and assiduity with which His Highness attends to all ceremonials in the most orthodox and convincing way on all important occasions like marriages in the Royal household, the Dassarah and the Birthday festivities. Even ordinary individuals leave much of the personal observances to the *Purohits*. Not so His Highness. I do not know how many of us have not felt the tediousness of sitting long hours for he sake of a solemn religious or social function. But for the last 25 years or even longer His Highness has not budged an inch from the most conscientious and scrupulous observance of all details on all such occasions. The moral effect on the populace has been very good and I have heard from my friends from British India who

were visitors to Mysore, of their rapturous glee at the great attachment on the part of the Mysore ryots to their sovereign. Rain, darkness, any amount of discomfort on the roadside, they would cheerfully undergo to have a sight of their prince who for the sake of the nation, preserves the sanctified traditions of his house and family.

His Highness's puntuality and steady attention to State work in fixed hours at the offices set apart for the purpose are wellknown to those who have any insight into such matters. Probably one of the greatest achievements of His Highness is the development of will power and the soul force to a remarkable extent and His Highness's constant tours on pilgrimage to distant holy centres is a matter wellknown to the public His Highness's inordinate interest in music and his extraordinary powers of judgment over the skill of Musicians and his liberal rewards to those who distinguish themselves in the Court are proverbial throughout Southern India.

The reserve power which His Highness commands in the exercise of his royal functions was well illustrated to me by a valued friend of mine who narrated the following interesting anecdote. Once a highly talented English Civilian officer who was associated with His Highness for a very long period in responsible positions made the following observation:—

"His Highness has understood me very well. But I have not been able to understand His Highness at all".

His Highness is generally very careful in selecting his direct subordinates but once the selection is made, his kindness and consideration towards them are such as to inspire lifelong loyalty in them. They are scarcely or never disturbed except on promotion or advancement. The division of labour and of functions is as perfect in Mysore as in any other enlightened Court. His Highness has been a defender of not only his own faith, but of all the faiths of the different classes of his subjects. It is not a question of religious neutrality. It is with His Highness a subject of religious veneration and good will to all religions. His Highness's sporting talents and love of sports are wellknown to the people. I know of few noble men in all India who can handle a Motor car with greater skill than His Highness or who can drive so slow or who can avert by sheer presence of mind in handling the machine accidents which at first sight may seem inevitable. His Highness's personal kindness to those who are privileged to catch his eye while at work is another great incentive in the Mysore State for the promotion of the feelings of personal attachment and devotion to the throne. I am happy in the memory of a singularly pleasing incident in this direction in my own experience. In the first year of the Mysore Exhibition in 1907 His Highness took inordinate care and exhibited great deal of personal sympathy in the arrangements for the Exhibition. His Highness would go into details with patience and a cheerful frame of mind. In the second year in 1908, His Highness was so anxious that the quality and

quantity of Exhibits should show no deterioration when compared with the first year that His Highness just before a day of ascending the throne for the Dusserah paid a surprise visit to the Exhibition Hall at about 6 in the evening. Probably our readers may not know that according to hoary custom during the 10 days of the Dusserah, before the procession is completed His Highness is not privileged to go out to public institutions: Consequently the exhibition would have become old by the time his visit in State took place. Therefore, to satisfy himself that the second year's exhibition would in no way be inferior to the first year's, His Highness took so much trouble. Mr. Subbusami Aiyar, the Superintendent of the Industrial School and myself (the secretary) were there. The packages and consignments half-opened, half-arranged, were in the most disorgnarised state. Loading and unloading were going on and had just then ended. In those days we had no electric lights in the Exhibition Hall. Both of us conducted His Highness with candle lights and showed him important exhibits in their confounded condition. His Highness was satisfied and while taking leave of us he gently turned to me and said: "Please take care, you don't run mad in your enthusiasm for work and take care of your health". These encouraging words sustained me like a charm for many years after they were uttered. I then found out how strong were the human sympathies in His Highness's heart and I thought blessed are the officers who can count on such appreciation.

Long May His Highness live in health and strength to rule over his most precious kingdom and May the people of Mysore be blessed to witness His Highness's Golden Jubilee in the year of grace 1952 is my fervent prayer to God.

PRINTED AT THE MADRAS LAW JOURNAL PRESS, MYLAPORE, MADRAS.

लाल बहादुर शास्त्री राष्ट्रीय प्रशासन अकादमी, पुस्तकालय
al Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administrati n Librar y
मसूरी
MUSSOORIE 100087

यह पुस्तक निम्नांकित तारीख तक वापिस करनी है।
This book is to be returned on the date last stamped.

दिनाँक Date	उधारकर्त्ता की संख्या Borrower's No.	दिनांक Date	उधारकर्त्ता की संख्या Borrower's No.

GL 070.92
SUB

070.92
Sub

अवाप्ति संख्या
Acc No. 5957

वर्ग संख्या
Class No.

पुस्तक संख्या
Book No.

लेखक
Author Subba Rao.

शीर्षक
Title Revised ...

070.92
Sub

5957

LIBRARY 100087
LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI
National Academy of Administration
MUSSOORIE

Accession No.

1. Books are issued for 15 days only but may have to be recalled earlier if urgently required.
2. An over-due charge of 25 Paise per day per volume will be charged.
3. Books may be renewed on request, at the discretion of the Librarian.
4. Periodicals, Rare and Refrence books may not be issued and may be consulted only in the Library.
5. Books lost, defaced or injured in any way shall have to be replaced or its double price shall be paid by the borrower.